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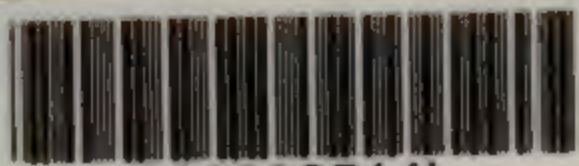
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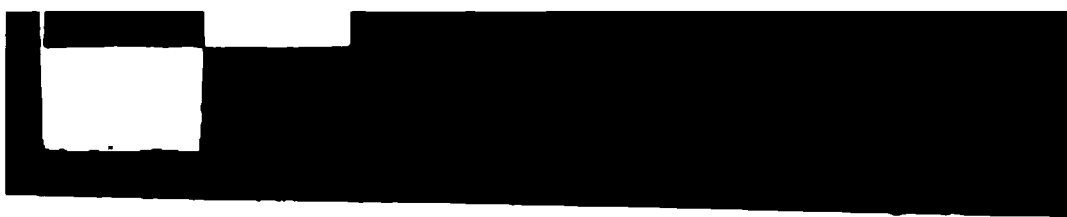
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FUTER ALI SHAH

*Painted by a Persian Painter in the Palace of the Author
Published by George G. Allen, New York, 1850*

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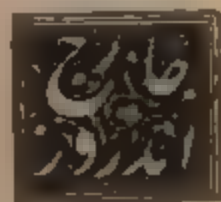
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he has been enabled to obtain, will make that portion of his volumes worthy of attention.

The travelling incidents in Koordistan are from letters penned at the time to the author's friends in England. This he trusts will not be without its recommendation ; it being usually admitted that "one line written on the spot is worth a thousand recollections."

Although the author makes no pretensions to any thing beyond slight sketches of Persia and its inhabitants, written during his various wanderings over that country, he is by no means indifferent to the public favour : indeed, his seeking it has, in Persian phraseology, caused "the nightingale of the pen to flutter around the rose-bud of expectation." He will only add, in words from the same source, "may its bounty increase, and its shadow never be less !"



LONDON, 1st April, 1841.

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REMINISCENCES
OF A THREE YEARS'
RESIDENCE IN PERSIA.

CHAPTER I.
THE "KHELAAT U PUSHAN."

It is generally about the end of May that the ceremony takes place of the prince arraying himself in the royal robe of honour, conferred upon him by his Majesty of Persia; and this, according to court etiquette, must be done publicly. Near all the different cities, buildings are purposely erected for this ceremony, called the "Khelaat u Pushan," or place for putting on the honorary dress with which the prince is invested by his sovereign. The public exhibition of it is intended

to show that he still basks in the Shah's favour—the countenance of the “King of Kings” continuing to shine upon him.

In a pretty sheltered spot, looking luxuriant amid the barren hills surrounding it, richly watered, and wooded with the poplar, the chinar, and other foliage, in the midst of a small lake, stands a tall, spiral belvidere, in the upper story of which the prince receives his numerous visitors. This is surrounded by about three acres of well shaven lawn, on which thousands of the “Azerbaijanees” were squatted about in different groups, quietly awaiting the coming ceremonial. At the further end was pitched the royal tent, richly carpeted, and around it (forming a large enclosure) a treble row of the “Serboz,” or infantry, was formed, which, with their huge white trousers, boots, and black caps, made not a bad line of about a thousand men.

The city of Tabreez poured its contents into this delightful valley; the day was propitious, the occasion inviting; so “mounting the stirrup of activity to get into the saddle of accomplishment,” I soon arrived with my little party amidst the large assembly whom curiosity or custom had already convened.

Numerous "gholaums" were galloping about, giving directions, and arranging the coming ceremony, and a happy festivity seemed to pervade all classes, as I mixed amongst them, to see as much as I could of their character. There is a decent sobriety in Persian mobility that I have scarcely seen in any other; none of your noisy ebullitions of a village wake, as in my own country; none of the antic tricks of the mountebank, nor the low gambling of the thimble-rig; but the sober gravity of smoking, undisturbed by those spirituous potations which give so much animal recklessness to an English mob.

The troops were put through their evolutions, which I thought would not have disgraced a Hyde Park review; it was, in fact, English discipline engrafted on Persian subjects, through the indefatigable industry of their generalissimo, the late Major Hart.

In another tent, surrounded by numerous servants, was a group of very interesting looking "shah zadehs," or princes of different ages, from eighteen down to four years. There were about twenty of them altogether, richly dressed, and the sons of Abbas Meerza, —being but a small portion

however of his family. I could not but look upon them with a great deal of interest, when I reflected how precarious is the state of royalty in Persia; as on every accession to the throne, barbarous custom, or still more barbarous necessity, requires so many victims of the royal blood to be offered up, to quiet the fears or to establish the security of the newly raised sovereign; or, at any rate, that the eyes of the ill-fated striplings must be sacrificed.*

Whilst looking on at this interesting scene with my friend the "hakeem bashi," the penetrating eyes of the prince soon discovered him, and the "Isheagusi," or master of the ceremonies, was immediately sent down to summon him to the royal presence; and as he was marched up through the broad-staring ranks of the surrounding visitors,

* An English nobleman relates a curious illustration of this fact. On visiting one of the princes, then a young lad, he found him with his eyes shut, and feeling about with both his hands, like a blind person, for his kalleoon, which his servant was presenting to him. After a moment the gentleman asked, "What are you doing, prince? Is there any thing the matter with your eyes?" "Oh, no," said the boy, "nothing; but I am practising blindness. You know that when my father dies we shall all be put to death, or have our eyes put out, so I am trying how I shall be able to manage without them."

I felt thankful at not being subjected to a similar ordeal. There is nothing to me more positively distressing than "human ken"—I mean an aggregate of eyes, steadily fixed on their victim, and drinking in as it were his confusion. Congratulating myself on my escape from this publicity, I had retired to the cool grovy retreat, where, "sitting on my carpet of patience, I was smoking my pipe of expectation," when the appalling figure of the master of the ceremonies was making towards me, with "Sahib quj-ast"—where is the "Sahib?" (I really cannot translate this word, 'tis 'Master,' or 'Sir,' or whatever you please.) Resistance was impossible; the prince had ordered me into his presence; royal invitations amount to commands in this country, so I was marched through the wondering crowd, bidding defiance to my tortured feelings of *mauvaise honte*, which, however, I at last completely succeeded in conquering.

Bowing mandarin fashion in the royal presence, I was honoured with the usual compliments and enquiries—"Damaughist chauk ast," "how is your health?" "your place has long been empty," &c. I had to endure some ten minutes court etiquette, during which the prince asked me as to my travels,

how I liked Persia, and if my own country was to be compared to it; to which last question, when I recollected its mud regions, I assured his royal highness that it certainly was not. "Barikallah," said the prince, who took all my replies as complimentary.

Near the prince stood his brother, "Ali-nucky Meerza," looking down on the ground, not daring seemingly to look up without permission. Some other young princes were standing about, attired in splendid shawl dresses; and the courtiers, the "Kaimacan,"* with numerous Khans, &c. forming the prince's court, all were waiting in mute obei-

* Of the precariousness of the Persian court favour, the late "Kaimacan" was an instance, although one of his wives was of the royal "Kajars." Meerza Abool Cassim may be said to have ruled his late master, Abbas Meerza; and I heard him spoken of as the greatest enemy to Persia, he having betrayed the prince into the late precipitate war with Russia, by which, as my informant said, "his country had lost honour, territory, and money." The present Shah adopted him as his prime minister, or rather he found himself within his toils, and difficult to be extricated from them. The minister arrogated to himself so much power, as to become equally offensive to the Shah and the people. Murmurings, and at length loud complaints, reached the ears of his Majesty, who then determined "to finish him:" he gave orders for him to be strangled. The haughty minister was for a long time incredulous of his Majesty's commands; but he who had before played the monarch was now the victim of despotism, and he was

sance, to be perfumed with the liberality of their master's favour.

Prayers now began, so being dismissed from my audience, I ran off to see the interior of the belvedere, and had just reached the top of the stairs, when the gun fired, to announce that "the prince was coming." Down we bustled in most amusing confusion, and I hastened to run across the narrow bridge, which two persons can scarcely pass, when I met the prince in full majesty. I had just time to make my "salaam" as he passed me, and to notice his dress of honour, which was composed of white satin, richly studded with gold ornaments. It was short, hanging down only to the knee, with half sleeves; around the neck was a tippet of glossy fur, and on his head he wore a scarlet turban of shawl, raised very high, of the shape and twice the height of the crown of a hat, and without ornaments. I understand that the use of jewels is limited to the sovereign. The bagpipe band struck up as the prince walked out of the belvedere towards the royal tent.

strangled at Tehran in 1835. That he deserved his death there seems to be no doubt, since it was a matter of congratulation with all the people; their rejoicings were likened to those of the "Ede y nu Roaz."

What a noble looking being was Abbas Meerza—his dignified, yet perfectly easy deportment, and his soul-speaking countenance, beaming with affability and greatness. Really, I never saw so splendid a human form, moulded seemingly as a rich specimen of nature's works.

His royal highness walked right royally to the tent prepared for him on this beautiful lawn, with so much majesty and dignity as to impress all beholders by his imposing appearance, as he took his place on the carpet in the oriental style. The novelty and splendour of the scene I shall never forget, when his many attendants and officers of the court, all with red turbans and superb dresses, came forward to offer their congratulations.

There was seated around the prince, at a respectful distance, the "shah zadehs," or young princes, already alluded to. They were placed in exact position according to their birth; for there is perhaps no country in the world where etiquette is more strictly attended to than in Persia. The princes were fine looking youths, and apparently worthy scions of the illustrious "Kajar" family. It was an interesting sight to see them sitting in

the most rigid posture of respect, not seemingly daring to look up without their father's permission.

The first ceremony was the advance of the courtiers, led up by degrees with slow and solemn step by the master of the ceremonies, two or three at a time, from the lower part of the green platform on which the troops were stationed; resting every twenty paces, to make their obeisance almost to the ground to their royal master, whom they dare not approach nearer than about ten yards. It appeared to me that the master of the ceremonies instructed them when to bow appropriately; at any rate, he set them the example. It was altogether a regular oriental scene, and gave me the best possible idea of court manners in this country.

The poet laureat was then led up, reading at a most respectful distance a congratulatory ode on the prince, and the honours of the day. It is his office "to make the nightingale of the pen to flutter about the new-blown rose of royalty;" but the high flown style of the complimentary, which is so copious in the Persian language, I will not attempt to convey, since his voice failed him as he gradually approached nearer, bowing to

the prince; for it so happened that the laureat was a very stout man, and his steaming exertion under a mid-day sun, caused his compliments often to die away on his lips, and become almost inaudible.

The laureat was a man of parts, and, as the Persians say, would require "rivers of ink to run through meadows of paper to create an easy navigation for his thoughts." What they were on this occasion I could not find out, for but few of them reached me. This poetic effusion lasted some twenty minutes. Then other courtiers approached, amongst whom I noticed the "Kaimacan," or grand vizier, himself a very respectable poet. All these were spouting orations, not one word of which could I understand.

Some military display then took place; the troops fired, and the prince returned to the belvedere. The whole ceremony lasted about an hour and a half. The dresses of the Khans are very rich: they wear the scarlet turban instead of the black lambskin cap. The Persian costume is particularly handsome. A Cachemere robe trimmed with silver was the prince's ordinary dress.

We were now scrambling for a retreat through the broken ranks of pedestrians and equestrians of all sorts. Amongst the latter was the "Nokarch kanch," or the royal band, on camel-back. The Persians have no ear whatever for harmony;—the greater the noise, the better they are pleased. The band, with their dulcimers, cornets, and wind instruments of all sorts, began to discourse most discordant sounds; the camels became frightened, and off they ran, scattering the throng, and upsetting the musicians, to the infinite amusement of the bystanders.

I happened to be in the midst of the *melée* just as they were about to give some imposing effect by the flourish of trumpets, &c. The animals would stand it no longer; they seemed to have better ears for music than their masters; and, in their impatience to be gone, they nearly trod down some of the wondering crowd. I never witnessed a scene more irresistibly laughable.

The guns were fired from the backs of camels. These are termed "zambrooks," or camel swivels; and there is one advantage in this sort of moving battery, that the patient animal kneels to accommodate the gunner to his aim.

The custom of conferring dresses of honour in the East is of very ancient usage; and at the present time the richness of the "khelaat" indicates the favour of the sovereign. The ordinary dress consists of a "kaba," or long loose robe, sometimes with a shawl or girdle. We read of the magnificent "khelaat" presented by Cyrus to Syennedis, which, beside the dress, consisted of "a horse, with a golden bridle and a golden chain." It is stated, that on some such occasions, it was customary for the road to be strewed with roses, and watered, and glass vases filled with sugar were broken under the horses' feet. The treading upon sugar they deem an indication of prosperity, and the scattering of flowers was performed in honour of Alexander on his entry into Babylon.

Such, however, is Persian duplicity, and formerly practised by majesty, that a "khelaat" was sent to adorn a victim intended for spoliation or death. When clothed in the royal robe as "the man whom the king delighteth to honour," the assassin plunged the dagger of the royal ire or vengeance into his bosom. This belongs more to by-gone history.

The Serbozs* were formed into line, preparatory to the prince's return. I fell in with the train, and to see him on horseback was certainly a magnificent sight; so graceful was the simultaneous movement of both prince and horse, that he appeared to me to be of a perfectly distinct race from the general population.

The road was now crowded with the wondering auditory, and I being the only "Feringee" amongst them, came in for my share of the public gaze. As they waited respectfully the prince's coming back, there were no noisy ebullitions, as in a British crowd; they rather crouched from the royal eye than greeted it. The sight was both pleasing and novel to me, since I had never seen so much of the "Azerbaijanees" before. I think that at least thirty thousand of them must have lined the roads; and on the walls, the roofs, and every place where ingenuity could plant a head, there was to be seen the black cap. The beautiful ruins of the mosque "Sultan Kazan" had one entire covering of human beings. Great numbers of women, also, were peeping through their "chadres," but not a single nose

* "Serboz," in Persian, means one who stakes or plays away his head — no bad designation for a soldier.

was I permitted to see. Our bard's pithy description of a staring crowd comprises all that I would say, and with this I will close my day at the "Khelaat u Pushan:"—

“ Clambering the walls to see him, stalls, and bulks,
Are smothered up, leads filled, and ridges horsed
With variable complexions, all agreeing
In earnestness to see him.”

CHAPTER II.

THE "TAUJ U DOULUT."

It was in the month of August that I was wending my way through the narrow streets of Tehran, to obtain a fresher respiration outside the walls than I could find within them, when my course was suddenly arrested by a troop of "Faroshs,"* with their long sticks, clearing the road, and their menacing shouts frightening every poor wight that stood before them, who ran away into the passages, and took refuge from the fury of the "courouk," or royal proclamation, which ordains, that when

* These "faroshs" are menial servants, pitching tents, sweeping carpets, &c. From the latter employ, they derive their name. They are generally numerous in all great men's establishments, and are the executors of his will, and of his orders for the bastinado, &c.

any of the Shabs harem leave the palace, no man shall appear in the streets, on pain of death, and woe be to him that does not in some way avoid the hurricane of the eunuchs' * wrath.

"What is it!" I exclaimed to Gul Mahmoud.

"The Tauj! the Tauj!" and with breathless haste he added, "kebarder," 'take care.' Immediately the "faroshs" were amongst us, when one of them turned me suddenly to the wall, to prevent my seeing the coming procession; another handled Gul Mahmoud severely for daring to keep his stand near me, whilst all were shouting and clearing the way of every living animal, man, and beast. I could compare it to nothing but the threatened coming of a wild bull, such was the general consternation.

Placed in this position, I yet ventured to turn around, for a peep at this wonderful "Tauj;" but

* The eunuchs run in every direction, and fire guns loaded with ball to drive people from the roads. They would make no scruple whatever at killing any one that may happen to be in the way. The peasants fly from their villages when the alarm is given, and if any one is surprised by the coming up of the procession, he throws himself flat on the ground or stands to a wall during its passage, deeming himself most fortunate if the eunuch is satisfied by his thus humbling himself.

buried in shawls and rich oriental embroidery, I could form no idea if it was a male or female that sat on the horse, since they both use the same saddles. A boy, richly habited, and his steed sumptuously caparisoned, preceded "The Crown of the State," for such is the title of the "Tauj u Doulut," or the king's principal wife. Then followed some ladies of the household, all in rich wrappers of crimson or gold colour, sparkling with Asiatic finery. In the midst of these came the "Tauj" herself, with many eunuchs surrounding her, whose vigilant eyes, lest any one should see even the wrapper which enveloped their fair charge, bespoke the trusty keepers of the harem.

The scene was so transient, I had only time to notice that the principal distinction of the "Tauj" from her followers consisted in the richness of her shawls, and the splendid housings of the horse bestriden by her. The train was brought up by a motley group of attendants, about a hundred altogether.

The "Tauj" was returning from the "Nagaristan" Palace, not far from the city, the favourite summer resort of his majesty and wives. Except on these extraordinary occasions, none of the royal

haremites are to be seen in the streets of Tehran ; and such is the jealousy with which they are moved from place to place, that it would be positively fatal to any man to look upon the procession. The ladies are sometimes removed in a "takht revan." This is a machine on two poles, borne by mules before and behind. It is long enough to sit at length, and high enough for the comfort of reclining. The mules ought to be well trained, in order to step together, or the movement becomes very rough, as I have experienced.

The "Tauj u Doulut" was said to be the favourite wife of Futtee Ali Shah, and to manage the affairs of the "Andaroon," which are by no means unimportant, since large sums are annually expended for the females who inhabit it. The number of these royal prisoners it was difficult to ascertain. I have heard them estimated at a thousand. Not long before my arrival at Tehran, they had been materially thinned out ; but whether from his majesty's caprice, or from sudden qualms of avarice touching the expense, was not known. Some of them were bestowed as wives on the khans, being the most gracious mark of royal favour.

I could learn but little of the history of the present "Tauj;" nothing whatever as to how she found her way to the royal favour. She was said to have been the daughter of an obscure "kiabab" cook at Sheerauz, who kept a public eating house for these dainties, and that her brother was then in the same profession. She was esteemed to be a woman of talent, and a woman of taste too, so far as English porter goes, of which she took her bottle daily—such, at least, was the "*on dit*" of Tehran.

The jealousy of the Persians that their females be not seen by any but their legitimate lords is remarkably strong. I have seen numerous instances. The harems are guarded by the black eunuchs, who can alone enter the apartments, whilst the white eunuchs keep the doors. The observance of this custom among the ancients of the East is first instanced in Rebecca covering herself with a veil at the approach of her affianced lord. The females themselves are equally jealous of being seen, as in the times of "Vashti, the queen, who refused to come at the king's commandment to show the people and the princes her beauty." The observance of this custom is thus

enforced in the 24th chapter of the Koran—"And speak unto the believing women, that they restrain their eyes, and preserve their modesty, and discover not their ornaments, except what necessarily appeareth thereof; and let them throw their veils over their bosoms, and not show their ornaments, unless to their husbands," &c.

They imagine it perfect pollution to the female for any strange man's eyes to light upon her. Of their extreme jealousy many instances came before me, both of the upper and lower orders. I was coming into Sulimania very early in the morning, having made a night travel of it from Tehran, when I met the "takht revan" of one of the royal wives, in which she was being conveyed to that city. The machine was so completely covered in, and enveloped by curtains and wrappers, as to render it impossible to see the person within, even were they not cowled and coiled in shawl. A troop of "saroshs," with numerous other attendants and eunuchs, were clearing the way with menacing aspect. "Baulch!" cried out the eunuch. I was then so far off as to render it impossible to see any thing; but the road must be cleared, and I was obliged to go to an inconvenient distance, to avoid

seeing even the machine which contained the royal prisoner.*

What an absurdity does this appear to us! but unless the strictest attention be given by the "ferengee" stranger to this custom, his Persian travel might be much endangered. I was once riding around the walls of Tabreez, when suddenly I saw some horsemen galloping towards me. "Beru! beru!" said the "farosh;" I enquired why, since this was a public path. I must immediately get out of it, he said, as a daughter of the Shah and the "Kaimacan's" wife had taken a fancy to promenade a little on this road, which must be immediately cleared for her presence.

These eunuchs are most important officers of the royal establishments; their influence with the Shah or the Prince is often pre-eminent to that of the grand vizier himself; he forms the nucleus

* It were endless to narrate instances of Persian jealousy as regards female seclusion. A Khan with whom I was well acquainted, and who was lately married, had offered a large sum to his father for permission to see his bride elect. The offer was scoffed at, the seeing her would have been deemed a profanation; and who can tell but that it might have cancelled the marriage contract? The circumstance has sometimes happened in Persia, of a Laman deceiving a Jacob, who thought he had married "Rachel, and behold it was Leah!"

of all intrigues within and without the palace. From the unbounded sway which he exercises over the ladies of the harem, he becomes the terror and the courted of the fair prisoners. The ugliest stamp which nature can imprint forms one of the requisites for office ; brutality, intrigue, and all the other dark shades of character, make him up a very Machiavel.

CHAPTER III.

THE "MESHEDEES."

THE Meshedees are pilgrims, who having made a visit to the saint's shrine, "Imaum Reza," at Meshed, in Khorassan, are from thenceforth always thus styled—a sort of religious honour, of which the Persians are very tenacious. I had made a long march of it one day, when I met large parties of them on the "Khoftan Khu."

This mountainous district divides ancient Media from "Irak Adjemi." Some part of it bears the remains of a pavement, said to have been constructed by Abbas the Great, and there are further and more ancient proofs of antiquity on the summit of a rock—the ruins of a fortress, called "Virgin's

Fort." The story is, that Artaxerxes built this fort, where he imprisoned a princess of the blood royal; but from its having become the resort of robbers, it was reduced to its present fragments.

At the foot of the mountain winds a muddy stream, "the Kizzil Ozzan," which runs into the Caspian. Its crumbling bridge bespeaks not only antiquity, but danger, and requires the utmost care to avoid the pits in it, the wear and tear of time and rough usage.*

This "kafilah" of pilgrims was headed by the Moolahs, and the train was composed of numerous devotees, including females, and what is more extraordinary, bearing with them the corpses of their deceased friends to be interred in this consecrated ground, which is by some Mahomedans deemed indispensable to their admittance into paradise.

* It was near this bridge that the murder of Major Brown took place some thirty years ago, as was then stated, by banditti. Persia was at that time in a comparatively barbarous state, great jealousy was felt, even by the Shah, at Europeans visiting the country. Our gallant countryman, well armed, and confiding in the strength of his attendants, although cautioned of the probable danger, embarked heedlessly on his journey. The attack was instantaneous; he fell, his servants dispersed, and some of the booty was subsequently traced at Tehran. No attempt was made to discover the murderers, and the poor victim was unrevenge.

These corpses were contained in long chests, something like gun cases, there being one slung on either side of the horse. On passing them the smell was most offensive.

The moolahs were chaunting their "kelemeh islam," or profession of the Mussolman faith, "God is God, there is but one God, Mahomet is the Prophet of God, and Ali the lieutenant of God." One of them I thought looked very hard at me, seeing a "Kaffir," or infidel, coming up the hill, and sung out more vociferously to the honour of the Prophet.

On coming into a narrow pass I found myself wedged in amongst the throng, as though enlisted in the pilgrimage as one of the followers of the profligate polygamist, who has done more to bind a world in his chains of darkness than any other permitted impostor. I soon, however, made hasty retreat from the ranks of "the dead burying their dead."

It is difficult to describe this motley assemblage of pilgrims, dead and living, under the banners of the prophet; for they bear his ensign floating over them, and exhibit a zeal unknown to the followers of the Messiah. This pilgrimage is much insisted

upon by all good Mahomedans. The tomb to which they resort at Mesbed, of Imaum Reza, is said to have been established by Shah Abbas, who, alarmed at the wealth carried annually out of his dominions by the pilgrimage of his subjects to the "Hadj," or Mecca, sought to divert their offerings to a shrine in Persia. This shrine is held in such high respect by the true believers, that the merchant will sacrifice his wealth and the khan his rank to be thus deemed a holy devotee of the prophet.

To be a meshedee, or an "hadji," is, in fact, deemed a great honour. The latter title is to be obtained at Mecca only, and then the black cap is exchanged for the turban. They will sometimes take two years to perform this last pilgrimage, leaving their worldly pursuits, and sacrificing half their wealth, thus to propitiate the prophet. The Koran thus enjoins the pilgrimage:—"Verily, the first house appointed unto me to worship was that which is in Mecca, blessed and a direction to all creatures. Therein are manifest signs, the place where Abraham stood; and whoever entereth therein shall be safe; and it is a duty towards God, incumbent on those who are able to go

thither, to visit this house." At Mecca they show the stone, and pretend that there is on it a print of Abraham's foot. So respected is the house said to be, even by the birds and the beasts of the field, that the former never light upon it, and the latter, upon their approach, immediately lose their fierceness!

There is another class more holy than these, which are the "Syceeds," or descendants of the Prophet. They are a numerous class, far beyond any thing that Mahomet's family could have extended to, and are distinguished by a green turban. They are considered by good Moslems to be invested with inherent sanctity, and entitled to peculiar respect.

There are other shrines in Persia equally respected with that at Meshed. At Koom there is a mosque, and tomb of Fatima, the daughter of Imsum Reza, which was held in great sanctity by his late majesty. There is also the tomb of Sefi the First, and of Shah Abbas the Second; he is said to have expended annually an immense sum in ornamenting the tomb of Fatima. He covered the cupola with gold plates. The royal bounty was followed by that of his court and some of his

wives, who with jewellery and precious stones rendered it immensely rich. Koom was the favourite resort for the "bust," or sanctuary, and it is said that Abul Hassan Khan, twice ambassador to the court of St. James's, found protection here from the royal ire.

I have not myself visited the tomb, but was told by those who had, that the body becomes not only food for worms but for rats, which abound here to such a degree, that they have scarcely time to make the deposit ere the man eater seizes the putrescence, threatening the living as well as the dead, the moment the body is lowered, uncoffined, into its last cell.

The use of coffins is almost unknown in Persia. The body is simply wrapped in a coarse striped cloth. Thus laid on the bier, without pall or other covering, it is hastily conveyed to its last home. The superstitious feeling in favour of interment on the sacred soil at Meshed is so great, that they will sometimes disinter bodies from other ground, where they had lain two or three years. I frequently met "kafilahs" of these corpses, which were generally announced by the most offensive smell.

I passed another of these saints' tombs, not far from Kishlock, which they called "Imaum Zadeh," and found here a most luxurious resting place in a very pretty "baula khaneh," surrounded by flowers and fruits. It was a large circular building, surmounted with a dome of exquisite workmanship, having some rough paintings on the walls within. The saint's grave was stoned over with very good masonry. I could learn nothing of his history; but they told me that the most profound veneration was entertained for him by the Persians. Some say that he was the twelfth and last Imaum according to the "schiahs," and was the legitimate successor of the Prophet; that he ascended to Heaven without having ceased to live, and that he is destined to reign at some future period over the whole world, and to destroy all Anti-Mahomedans. Others say that Imaum Rezza had been poisoned with some grapes, the poison having been mixed with them by order of Mamoon-al-Rasheed, of Koos in Khorassan; but so clouded is the history, that nothing can be vouched for.

Interment of the dead is very prompt in Persia. The "murdeshars," or washers of the dead, are

immediately employed; and sometimes in a few hours after death the body is consigned to its last home. I often met them at the gates of the city, preceded by the moolahs, and the passing stranger giving his shoulder to the load, so that there is no lack of bearers to take it to the grave, where the prayer called the "talchi" is pronounced by the moolah. The Persians have a superstitious idea that by performing this service they merit the approbation of the Prophet. They have been sometimes known to inter the living amongst the dead; or rather, it has been discovered, by soon after visiting the grave, that life had returned, the body having been found in a different position from that in which it was placed.

The grave-grounds are of the most miscellaneous description, generally in the immediate vicinity of the city, and exposed to men and quadrupeds treading over them with the utmost indecency. Small slabs, of rude workmanship, and ruder engraving, indicate here and there the quality or the name of the dust interred below. But in this particular the Turks are very superior to the Persians: their cypress-enclosed burying grounds, and rich gilded tombstones, bespeak

every respect for the memory of the departed dead.

It is an ordinary custom amongst the Persians to visit the graves of their departed friends, particularly on the Sabbath eve (Thursday). I often saw groups of people uttering the most doleful lamentations, and bedewing with their tears the dry soil which they surrounded. They imagine the dead capable of *hearing*, but not of *answering* their plaints.

During the devastating cholera of 1830, in Persia, it was impossible to inter the numerous dead. Nearly twenty-five thousand inhabitants of Tabreez alone fell victims to it. These dreadful scenes are thus described by an eye-witness:—
“Terror was struck into the minds of the people. Many were taken ill through fear, and died; men, women, and children collected together in large companies, crying and beseeching God to turn away his judgments from them. This they did bare-headed, and without shoes, humbling themselves, they said, because they knew they were great sinners. The air resounded, day and night, with their cries; at length, all classes fled to the mountains, leaving the city quite deserted; the

bazaars were shut up, and not a person to be seen in the place. In October of this year, the cholera raged most furiously, and of the villages half the inhabitants had been swept away: the corn was left unreaped, the cattle were wandering without owners, and famine seemed to be the inevitable consequence of the pestilence. Interments could not take place; servants dropped at the thresholds of their masters. Evident proofs were given, during this visitation, that the disease was not infectious.*

Near the city gates is built up the "numaz jah," or place of prayer: it is merely a raised platform of brickwork, on which some of the Persians perform their daily devotions, and here the bodies are sometimes brought to be prayed over, previous to interment.

The Mahomedans are strongly impressed with the idea of guardian angels being appointed to record men's actions, both good and bad, that they may be exhibited at the last day; and thus

* I had the above from a doctor, who stated to me that, being visited by some cholera patients, one of them, whilst he was prescribing, died in his arms. He was similarly exposed many times without taking the disease.

speaks the 50th chapter of the Koran:—"When the two angels deputed to take account of man's behaviour take an account thereof, one sitting on the right hand, the other on the left, he uttereth not a word but there is a watcher with him ready to quote it, and the agony of death shall come in truth."

They have a tradition that the angel who notes a good man's actions has the command over him who notes the bad actions; that when he does a good action, the angel of the right hand records it; that when he commits a bad action, the angel on the right says to him on the left, "Forbear setting it down for seven hours; peradventure he may repent or ask pardon." This reminds me of Sterne's beautiful allusion to "the accusing spirit which flew up to Heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in, and the recording angel, as he wrote it down, dropped a tear upon the word, and blotted it out for ever."

At the "numaz jah," already spoken of, many of the "sheahs" perform their morning and evening devotions. This duty is performed five times a day by all good Mahomedans. The prayer of the daybreak is particularly insisted upon by

Mahomet, as at that time he says the night angels are charged to give place to the angels of the day. But public devotion is the general practice amongst these people wherever they may be. It matters not what interruptions may occur—the prostrations, the kneelings, kissing the ground, the rapid play of the lips—all goes on with a seeming fervency, peculiar to the followers of Mahomet. On the Sabbath eve the different gates have their Koran readers, proclaiming aloud the doctrines of the Prophet.

What an ostentatious display this seems to be of religious profession, and so different from *his* commands! “And thou when thou prayest enter into thy closet.” I have always considered that religion, if it be merely external, is better than none at all. When shall we see the followers of the Messiah proclaiming him in the market-places or on the house-tops! Although he does not enjoin pilgrimages to Jerusalem, as the Mahomedans enjoin pilgrimages to Mecca, yet why are his services so imperfectly observed, or seemingly the last duty thought of, as in nothing to compete with Mahomedan zeal.

I was frequently attracted to the burying-

grounds by the novelty of these "grave lamentations." The women were apparently the principal mourners, and children have I seen in seeming agonies, whilst the young Moslem, occupied with the Koran, was reading aloud from its inspiring pages. I like these associations from the living to the dead, it reminds me of the idea of our great poet :

————— " Each soul
That ever animated human clay
Now wakes, is on the wing."

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVENING SALAAM.

It is customary for the Persian monarchs to show themselves twice a-day to their subjects at a public audience, where they hold what may be termed a "court of common pleas," for redress of grievances, pronouncing judgment, &c., such as "off with his head"—"cut out his tongue," or some such other summary mandate, which is always as summarily executed. The sovereign is supposed to witness these executions, and during my stay at Tehran, a culprit was suspended by the legs from two poles, and literally cut in halves by the henchman in the royal presence.

This mode of punishment is common in Persia,

and it is called the "shekeh," and is performed by the chief executioner, a most important officer, and always near his majesty's person.

They sometimes adopt the ancient mode of executions, said to have been first tried upon "Bessus," the murderer of Darius—that of having two young trees brought together by main strength at their summits, and then fastened with cords. The culprit being brought out, and his legs tied with ropes at the top of the trees, the cords which fasten them together are then cut, and by the power and elasticity of their spring the body of the culprit is immediately torn asunder, and the different parts are left attached to each tree separately.*

The ceremony of the "salaam" was much more simple than I thought could comport with the dignity of the "cousin of the sun and moon." Nor were the people attracted to it very numerous. The raw-looking troops formed a large circle near the "Nagaristan," or palace of his majesty's summer

* Other modes of punishment in Persia savour equally of the barbarous ages. Scooping out the eyes is a very ancient practice. Mutilating the limbs, and boring the nose and tongue with an awl, are some of the signs of the royal displeasure; also blowing from the mouth of a mortar, beheading, and the bow-string.

residence, environed with a small park of artillery. Then the "Nokareh kaneh," or royal band—and such music! "enough to split the ears of the groundlings"—what with the drums, dulcimers, &c.; but the leading instruments were ram's horns, attached to long poles, through which the men "blew wind and cracked their cheeks," producing every imaginable discord—which, however, seemed the music of the spheres to the Persians.

Standing on the tip-toe of impatience, and looking round on this prospect of novelty, I had time to notice the sundry groups which were stationed within the "mujlis," or assembly, amongst whom were some of the "shah zadehs," or princes of the blood royal, the "hakeem bashi," or chief physician, the "ameen u doulut," or finance minister, Abul Hassan Khan, a regular Falstaff, who has been twice in England as ambassador from the court of Tehran, and is admirably sketched by Mr. Morier in his history of "Hadji Baba," whose extraordinary adventures, by the bye, are very descriptive of the precariousness of royal favour in Persia.

In the centre of the "mujlis" was placed a plain English chair, destined as the imperial seat of jus-

tice. This was the great centre of attraction, and as the different groups stood around it, they assumed the profoundest gravity, like a corps of mandarins waiting the imperial nod, "to nod again." There is a quiet bearing in the Persian mobility which I have never seen in any other—a sort of respectful terror, if I may so say, at the approach of majesty; they have a religious respect for their sovereigns, whom they call "Kebleh Almm," or asylum of the world. They are thus taught by Saadi, who says of him, "Even if all should be vice in thy slave, any vice approved of by the prince becomes a virtue; he who does not think with the sovereign washes his hand in his own blood." "If the king should say, in broad day it is night, it is necessary to exclaim immediately, behold the moon and stars." His subjects may be said, therefore, to live on the breath, and are dependent on the will, of "his most despotic majesty."

Some half hour passed subject to this oriental discipline, when, as by the wand of enchantment, the scene was changed by the slow and majestic approach of Futtee Ali Shah, and, by one simultaneous movement, every head was bowed with

a low and graceful inclination; the rams'-horns ceased their creaks, and an universal "bush" pervaded the assembly. Nor could it be otherwise: a frown over the imperial brows may denote destruction to some one within that assembly; a certain movement of the hand is the signal for death.

His Majesty, moreover, was on this occasion dressed up in smiles. I minutely regarded this "King of Kings;" and, to say truth, he was "every inch a king;" of taper stature, with a long flowing beard, worthy the Persian's oath; for they swear by the king's beard. His gait was right royally imposing; he strode the earth not with affected majesty, but with the innate dignity of the oriental metaphor—"a god! a god!" Simply habited, I saw nothing in the way of distinction, but that the handle of his Majesty's dagger sparkled with brilliants.

When the imperial clay was seated on the chair, then did "the canons bruit it to the heavens," which is the signal for the Khans, the ministers, and the beglerbeks "to mount the steed of acquiescence at the royal command, and putting their foot into the stirrup of submission, to proceed on the embassy of humility."

“Bechesm” is the general reply of these slaves to majesty’s commands,—“my eyes are yours,” which is true enough, for the king can order them to be brought him on a gold tray, if he sees fit; and this has formerly been done.

In breathless suspense the royal pleasure was now waited for, which was announced by “kaleoon-byor;” this the pipe-bearer presents on his knee, and the king, taking three whiffs of the odoriferous weed, returned it with the same ceremony.

The doctor was then summoned, and reverentially bowing at stated distances, was admitted to audience, some ten yards off, introduced by the “Isbeagusi,” or master of the ceremonies; for it is never permitted to approach nearer the royal person, not even for the issue of his own loins. Etiquette is extremely severe in Persia, from the monarch down to the “Jcloodar,” or groom; the princes never sit in the king’s presence, without his special commands so to do; nor sons with their fathers, nor younger brothers before their elders, until ordered by them.

The king is generally attended by his “gholaums,” or slaves, a sort of body guard, many of whom accompanied him to the “salaam.” They

always attend the Shah on horseback; they are likewise the messengers of the imperial will, or couriers bearing his firmans to distant provinces. He has about three thousand of them ready to mount the "stirrup of activity;" and it is deemed a great honour to bear the rank of a "Gholaum u Shah Padi Shah."*

A group of princes was then summoned, and amongst them I noticed Ali Shah,† the "haukim," or governor of Tehran: after being honoured with

* The original institution of these gholaums was somewhat like that of the Janissaries at Constantinople, and the Mamelukes of Egypt, being formed from the children of Christian parents taken in battle. In Persia they have never been so formidable as in the other countries.

† This Prince, who is called the "Zili Sultaun," is the brother of the late Abbas Meerza by the same mother. On the death of his father he proclaimed himself king, and played the monarch for thirty-five days, having plundered the treasury the first thing. He was at length seized and imprisoned when his present majesty advanced on Tehran, and gave in his submission by assisting at the coronation. This extraordinary clemency of the king was abused by the "Zili Sultaun," who escaped from his confinement in the citadel of Erdebil, during my last residence in Persia, with two other princes, to the Russian frontiers, seeking for aid to assert his rights again to the throne. He subsequently went to Egypt on the same errand to Mahomet Ali, whose advice to him seems to have dissipated the fumes of empire. He then set out on a pilgrimage to Mecca, whether to implore the Prophet's aid, or to expiate his sins, has not been stated.

a short conference, they resumed their station. Successively many others were brought up to audience, but whether chancellors or exchequer lords I could not find out. The whole affair lasted only half an hour, when his majesty re-strode with equal grace to the Nagaristan palace.

His most despotic majesty has been renowned for the clemency of his government, although, such is the abjectness of his subjects, that they say, "whether you slay, or whether you pardon, my head and face are on thy threshold."

His majesty was a very respectable poet; and the Persians are devoted to poetry. I copy from one of the poems of Hafiz, to evidence their style and inspiration, of which they say, "it shows the sublime and ardent inspiration of a soul impatient of its earthly prison for reunion with that fountain of life from which it originally flowed, and into which it will be finally absorbed."

"This earthly prison is not a cage worthy of a nightingale such as my soul, which longs for its native soil, the bowers of Paradise.

"I know not whence I am, nor whither I go. Alas! that my chief concern should be involved in such obscurity.

"How shall I contemplate that world, which is the abode of infinite purity, while thus entangled by an intimate union with matter.

"If my heart betray the fervour of desire, be not surprised—like musk it betrays its hiding place.

"Since my abode is in the presence of the virgins of Paradise, how can I frequent the banquet of revellers. . . . The desire which thus manifests itself by outward tokens was implanted in my heart by a heavenly houri, and even the power of wine is not able to remove it.

"I am adorned with gold and embroidery; but judge not by external appearances, I conceal under these splendid ornaments a fire which consumes me like a torch.

"Come then and remove from before him the existence of Hafiz, for in thy presence no one can hear from me that I am."

Their grand historian Ferdoosee was a poet; his "Shah Nameh," or History of Kings, is a poetic effusion of extraordinary genius, containing one hundred thousand lines, which it took him thirty years to accomplish, and is said to have been written by inspiration. He is called the Homer of Persia, for the narration of his battle scenes, for the purity of his style, and the elegance of his diction. His long and difficult name was Abul Cassem Munsuril Ferdoosee Hassan Ben Scharf. He wrote in the time of the Sultan Mahmoud, and was dissatisfied with the royal largess, so that he turned his eulogy into satire.

Saadi is a poet likewise in great estimation; but he is more grave and philosophic than the flowery

Hafiz, whose unbounded fancy was the particular trait of his genius. The rose and the nightingale are two of the particular subjects of the poet's inspiration, of which they thus speak:—"The nightingale if he sees the rose becomes intoxicated; he lets go from his hands the reins of prudence." The violet also comes in for the compliment of the muse.

"When the young rose in crimson gny
Expands his beauties to the day,
And foliage fresh her leafless boughs o'erspread,
In homage of his sovereign power,
Bright regent of each subject flower,
Low at her feet the violet bends her head."

"O Hafiz! thy delightful lay
That on the wild wind floats,
Resembles much, our poets say,
The nightingale's rich notes.
What wonder then thy music flows
In the sweet season of the rose."

Hafiz may be called the Shakspeare of Persia. This poet lived in the time of Timour, and some of his odes are translated in our language by John Nott. They are considered by the Persians to be a masterpiece of elegance in the original. I copy the following from his epitaph. - His tomb is of

white marble, in a small garden called Hafizeen, near Shiraz, and on the tablet are two of his odes very beautifully cut.

“It is but just that thou shouldst receive a tribute from all fair youth, since thou art the sovereign of all the beauties of the universe. Thy two piercing eyes have thrown Khata and Khoten into confusion. India and China pay homage to thy curled locks—thy graceful mouth gave the streams of life to Khezi—thy sugared lip renders the sweet reeds of Egypt contemptible.”

The overweening vanity of Saadi was most conspicuous, which I derive from his epitaph, (said to have been written by himself) on his tomb, not far from Shiraz.

“O passenger, who walkest over my grave, think of the virtuous persons who have gone before me. What has Saadi to apprehend from being turned into dust? He was but earth when alive, he humbled himself to the ground; and, like the wind, he encompasseth the whole world; he will not continue dust long, for the winds will scatter him over the universe. Yet as long as the garden of science has bloomed, not a nightingale has warbled so sweetly in it. It would be strange if

such a nightingale should die and not a rose grow upon his grave."

I cannot find that the Persians have any predilections for literature beyond their taste for poetry, for which their rich language is so calculated. Not a printing press exists in Persia, and the only effort which I have heard of in this way, is a lithographic press established by Meerza Saulik at Tehran, where some partial impressions of the Koran had been struck off, and with which he had established a weekly journal of the ordinary events of that city.

But let us from the poetry of life to its dull realities—apologising for this digression.

His majesty was not a gross feeder. His meals were attended by the "Nauzir," or steward of the household, who always sees to the preparation of them, and is answerable for their being unmixed with any deleterious drugs. The China dishes, with silver covers, being placed on the tray, are sealed by the "Nauzir," and he accompanies them to the royal presence; being placed on the "sofra," which is of shawl, on the ground, he breaks the seal, and then his majesty dips his fingers in the dishes. Having ascertained their quality, he buries

his knuckles in the "chillon," or mountain of rice, of which he is very fond. Nothing must be served that requires carving, beyond pulling the limbs of a fowl with the fingers; for even majesty never deigns to use a spoon, fork, or plate.

At a respectful distance stands the "Hakeem hashee," or chief physician, to watch the royal feeding, and to prescribe an instant remedy should majesty choke himself, or eat any thing to disagree with him. The hour of dinner is between eight and nine. The laws of Mahomet proscribe wines of all sorts; but as they say nothing about English porter, it is said that his majesty sometimes indulged in this beverage. Sherbet forms their only regular drink, a not unpleasant mixture of sours and sweets, which is served up in China bowls, to be drunk with wooden ladles of excellent carved work.

It is a general custom with the kings of Persia to eat in solitary grandeur. The late Shah would sometimes have select portions of his family to breakfast with him, a dozen or so. As I have heard described by the bystander, they used to squat around him in the form of a crescent, of which he was the centre, and were all placed scrupulously according to rank.

Persian cookery is very choice, the "naring" or "pillau" being the royal dish of Persia, composed principally of rice, with a chicken in the middle, or some savoury cotelette. Great temperance generally prevails in Persian feeding; nature is merely sustained, not overloaded. The king would sometimes roll up a ball of rice, called a "lugmeh," in his hand, and put it into the mouth of his favourite, who would swallow it with much deferential greediness.

His majesty was said to have been an early riser. Nothing can be more difficult than to know the details where the king lives in such utter seclusion, but I have heard that his government in the "harem" partook of the strictest discipline. The chief eunuch is an officer of the greatest importance in the establishment, who, with his auxiliaries, exercises the most unbounded sway. The other officers are of the female sex. To preserve the peace of such a community, where more than twelve hundred were congregated together, with all their conflicting claims of pride and power, required no little stretch of authority. The ladies' toilet in Persia is no inconsiderable item in his majesty's expenditure; for an overweening vanity,

and an inordinate estimate of personal beauty, are characteristic of the Persians.

His majesty, so rich in his female treasures, had a most contemptuous opinion of other monarchs not similarly wealthy, particularly of the king of England, when informed by Sir John Malcolm that he had only one wife. "What, only one wife! — wallah!" Then, boasting of his own female establishment, how his majesty laughed! this was almost incredible to king and courtiers. "And he cannot say 'cut off his head,' when he likes, of any of his subjects?" To "his most despotic majesty" the thing seemed quite ridiculous!

At the morning salaam every individual may have access to the king, thus personally going to the fountain of justice, without treading the tortuous paths of courts of law. The king is always attended by the chief executioner, or "ferusha ghuzzub," literally "servant of anger and violence;" for a sudden spark of fiery indignation igniting the royal wrath, may call this officer immediately into action, to annihilate some of his subjects, who are "less than the dust in his presence."

CHAPTER V.

THE PERSIAN "HAKEEMS," ETC.

THE lassitude of the Tehran climate in August (97 Farenheit, in the shade) induces disease, which sometimes engenders death; and a six weeks stretch on my mattress had prostrated my strength, and almost converted me into "food for worms;" but nature rallied, and the God of nature had decreed that I should not find a grave amongst the Moslems.

The table land on which Tehran is planted, subjects it to a sort of vertical exposure, from which one is almost tempted "to call on the rocks and mountains to cover one." The hot stifling air

rather diseases than refreshes the lungs, and the whole animal system falls prostrate before these noxious vapours. The principal inhabitants flock to the neighbouring villages at this season; and at a distance of three hours only, an extensive range of these villages, near the mountains of Shemiroun, offer delightfully cool retreats to the sicklied stranger.

At one of these villages, Kand, the British Elchee was encamped, whose courteous hospitality was so well known to all travellers. His Majesty went either to Camp or retired to the Nagaristan palace, accompanied by some of his wives and courtiers. The bazaars are then nearly the only districts occupied, and here the man of pelf would almost rather sink into the arms of plague than yield his money-getting occupation. But death stalked horribly around us in the city; scarcely a morning but the howl was heard, the frantic cries of the women bespoke boistrous but not permanent grief, and the doleful signal of the "muzzin," who announces from the roof of the mosque that another of Ali's followers had drunk of "the sherbet of eternity," the ear was constantly dinned with the trophies of the great

destroyer, who "daily eats his millions at a meal." *

New blood was at length engendered in my veins, and "anointed with the oil of resuscitation," I sprang into my saddle, escaping as it were from a pest-house. Once more I opened my lungs, when without the city walls, and breathed new vitality. As "a bird out of the snare of the fowler," so did I make my escape. I was never more joyous than when emerging from the gates of Tehran, and was buoyant beyond my strength. The evening was beautiful, as seated in the ruined "baula khaneh" of the caravansery at Sulimania, I enjoyed the surrounding scene of garden ground, abundant in melons and other fruit, productions which in this district are so rich and flourishing. This abundance, arising from irrigation, is almost peculiar to Persia, the grateful soil the moment it is watered springs into bloom. Scratch the earth, drop the seed into it, and fruit soon follows.

Here I imprudently indulged in my favourite

* There are professional mourners to be hired in Persia, who by wailing and weeping over the dead, are thus supposed to pay respect to their memory. I identify many of the Persian customs with those spoken of in the Bible. Thus, "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

musk melon, and dire were the consequences which followed. At Kasvinc, the third stage, I was more than thrown back into my former physical debility; those gaunt-eyed monsters, ague and fever, soon made their approach; the journey fatigues, added to my fruit intemperance, produced a second edition of my Tebran sufferings.

What was to be done? to be laid up in a Persian caravansery, where the only accommodation was a brick cell, twelve feet by eight, in a state of complete nudity. How my weary bones ached, as stretched on my mattress I sought every possible reclining position amidst the inquietudes of diarrhoea.

This is a disease which, though not peculiar to, is prevalent in this climate. I have no medical knowledge on the subject, but it appears to me to be an intestinal rebellion against even the necessities of life.

To proceed was impossible; so I sent to implore the aid of the Mahomedan doctor, "Meerza Aboo Thaloub," the most renowned "hakeem" of the place. At six o'clock the next morning, a long bearded respectable looking gentleman walked into my cell, cautiously keeping its extreme dis-

ladce, to avoid contact. As to feeling my pulse, that was quite out of the question. He was a Muhomedan of the old school, some of whom would as soon cure a dog as a Christian.* But the "meerza" had compassion on me, and although I much doubted his skill, yet his kind manner and probing enquiries as to my symptoms, implanted within me a certain confidence, which goes far towards a cure. He prohibited me from any and every provision which he did not himself send me. "Not even water," said he, "will I allow you, and I will cure you in three days." "Inshallah," said I, "and may your shadow never be less."

The good doctor prepared my food and my drink, and I recollect with what earnestness I looked forward three times a day to the arrival of my mess of pottage (which might have been poison for aught I could tell), and if the Hadji who brought it was five minutes too late, I became angry and impatient, and it was most amusing to see the gravity with which he placed the bowl at my feet, retiring backwards and waiting until I had swal-

* By the Persian code of religious laws called the "Jumah Abassi," they are very particular in their intercourse with "Kaffirs," or infidels. They deem their touch to be pollution, too deeply so to be eradicated by any external process.

lowed the contents, looking, as I sometimes imagined, as if grudging the feeding of a Christian dog.

I must confess that I never did like Hadji as well as his master; but I won upon him by degrees. Hastily swallowing my flummery, I would sometimes ask for a second supply. "Marshallah barikallah," said he; but I never could bribe him.

My drink appeared to be some decoction of herbs, and my food was wheaten flummery seemingly. What were the secrets of the doctor's art I know not; suffice it, that he either cured or starved the disease, and marvellous as it seemed to myself, in ten days I was restored almost to my usual strength.

How to pay the Meerza without offending him was now the difficulty. On his last visit he pronounced me convalescent, and allowed me to resume my journey. I poured out my "zhamets," "kali zhamets," and did all I could to express how much trouble I had given him. "Not at all," said he, "I am your slave, and all I have is yours;" and he took leave of me with the "Khoda hafiz shuma,"—may God protect you.

Perfectly overwhelmed with both speech and

kindness, I felt quite oppressed with obligation. But the Persians soon remove this nightmare from you. He had hinted to my attendant what would be agreeable to him in the way of "peishcush," or present. I was more than happy to get out of his debt; though I found it cost me more than would a London physician. Nor did I forget Hadji, whose eyes glistened as he turned over my coins, thanking me with his "Alham dulillah!" praise be to God!

Such was "Meerza Abou Thaloub," the "hakeem bashi," or chief physician to the "rooknah doulut," or prop of the state, the prince governor of Kasvine. Hippocrates has never reigned in Persia, or if he has, his family have woefully degenerated. Description fails in speaking of medical ignorance, and the natives have great respect for any talent in this way. The Persians attribute all sickness to two causes;—the excess of heat and cold. Thus, if the patient suffers from the former, they bleed him; and for the latter they give cathartics. They will have it that every "ferengee" must be a doctor. Thus I, who scarcely know a bolus from a plaster, was often called upon to prescribe for

the fair sex. Except bleeding a man once by giving him a knock on the head, when the nose gave up a copious stream, I do not recollect being ever called upon by the other sex.

At Tehran numerous veiled invalids came to my door with "Nakoosh my shavam sahib," I am ill. I never could decline the necessary enquiries as to their maladies, &c., which were principally from fruit repletions,* and always said I never could prescribe without seeing the face. This was astounding to many of them; they indignantly rejected my conditions, and walked away. Others did by degrees open their "chadre," or veil, and it was amusing with what caution I was permitted first to see the mouth, then the eyes, they looking askance at me, laughing at the same time at their own shamefacedness. I had thus many a peep at a dark black eye, which otherwise to me would have remained obscured.

Sangrado like, I invariably ordered bleeding and hot water, and many a "zhamet" was I greeted with as the skilful "ferengee" doctor. I

* It is astonishing the quantity of fruit and sweetmeats with which these people gorge themselves.

would advise every traveller coming to Persia, to bring with him a box of pills and a lancet. These are the best travel passports.

As to surgery in Persia I should say there is no such thing. Their Mahomedan prejudices will not admit of dissection. The barbers may be deemed the only operators in such cases as bleeding, tongue cutting, &c. The great principle on which they act is, that the disease must be cured by a remedy of an opposite nature: thus for the heartburn, they will heap a quantity of snow on the breast of the patient.

Sir John Malcolm relates a curious instance of their cure for blindness, which he himself experienced. — "They filled a large vessel full of snow, I was desired to place my face near it, a red-hot stone was then thrown into the vessel, and the sudden dissolution of the snow caused a great perspiration, which was increased at the same time by a cloak being pulled over my head. The remedy, though very disagreeable, proved efficacious, and my sight was completely restored. This was imparted by the lady of a chief, in whose house I was a guest."

When they fail in their remedies, the "hakcem"

resorts to their favourite doctrine of fatalism. He says, "when it is decided by God that a man is to die, no human aid can be of avail." For the ague, which is a common complaint in Persia, and the most inveterate, of which I can bear witness, they beat the patient most unmercifully, in which treatment they say they generally succeed. I did not submit to this process during the many months of my intermitting visitor. Precisely at noon every other day the attack came on; it was preceded by a numbness of the extremities, and then the shivering, during which I could no longer keep my saddle. I was rather inconvenienced by this happening on my journey. Immediately my carpet was laid on the ground, I was wrapped up in horse cloths and cloaks, any thing that offered to keep warmth in me, and this under a tropical sun. Some water was immediately heated, and partaking of which, and laying thus for about an hour, was then able to resume my journey. How often have I kept the people waiting for me. "Sahib nakoosh ast" was the signal for stopping during the merciless attack of quartan ague. It was at length conquered by quinine.

The "hakeem bashi's" visits to the "harem

kanch" were sometimes of the most amusing description, as described to me by himself. In the long line of apartments, the ladies laying on their mats, but well screened over, were waiting the doctor's approach, with their various rheums and catarrhs, all depending upon him to get rid of their grievances. This implicit confidence in the skill of the doctor helps very much towards the cure, and is universally entertained in Persia. Accompanied by the chief eunuch, with numerous attendants guarding the way, the doctor stalks cautiously in, and nothing meets his eye but a series of hands, poked out from under the screen, and covered each with a gauze glove; for his touch merely upon the clay beneath would be deemed pollution but for this precaution. Then the titterings and laughings, the sobbings and sighings, many of the ladies feigning illness just to have a sight of the doctor, equally amused with himself at the passing scene. Meantime order is kept by the discipline of the eunuchs, which is sometimes very severe.

Some cases were bad, others frivolous. The doctor told me, that in one case he said he must see the patient before he could prescribe; but the

eunuch declared "mimkun nist sahib," it is impossible; entreaty and remonstrance was in vain, he would send her to "Jehannum" first. The next day on enquiry the reply was, "moord ast," she was dead. Thus was human life sacrificed to this bigotted national custom.

But what is the loss of a wife to the Prince of Persia! there is no chance of his becoming a widower, the meaning of the term is unknown in that country.

In former times the astrologers were often the only physicians, and they sought their remedies amongst the stars. But it so happened, that in one instance of a severe wound, the Shah grew worse under these celestial prescriptions. "Bejan Shah," "by the soul of the King!" said he, "unless you instantly cure me of my disorder, I will have you cut up into mince meat." The doctor, alarmed at his peril, suddenly declared that the hot brains of a man, if immediately applied, would prove efficacious. At that instant a glolaum came in with some pressing intelligence, entreating permission to rub his forehead at the Shah's threshold. "Knock him down," said the King, "and apply the remedy." The poor wretch was prostrated

and beheaded; the skull was emptied of its contents, and the hot brains applied to the King's wound—with what success the historian does not state.

I was once wending my way to Tehran from the "Takht Kajar," a country palace, three farseks off, when I met a long procession of "faroshs," headed by the chief eunuch, who was guarding a member of the royal harem to the palace. As usual they cried out "bauleh," and I was obliged to diverge from the path to avoid seeing even the shawl which enveloped the fair haremite. The sight of a "ferengee" stranger always excites attention, where it is only a few years since they have been tolerated at all. Having passed on at a most respectful distance, one of the faroshs was sent back with the enquiry if I was a "hakeem." Had I been bold enough to have answered in the affirmative I might have had the privilege, not only of seeing the fair invalid, but of counting the throbbing pulsations through the gauze glove, the lady halted, but I too modestly passed on, noticing only her unseemly gait at being mounted on two stirrups instead of one.

The late Shah was very particular respecting

his medicines; there was one purposely prepared for the "King of Kings," the principal ingredient of which was composed of "*pearls*;" these costly productions were pulverised, and infused. The "hakeem," my informant, did not tell me further respecting it, or of its object or result, but that such was the favourite draft of the King; nor did I hear that this medicine was protected by patent, certainly not likely to come into general use.

But one must be a "hakeem" in this country whether or no. I was once called on to a patient who had long been ill. He had been taking a quantity of medicine, he said, but grew worse. I asked what he had taken? "Davau kali kourdam sahib," I have eaten a quantity of pills. "Pills!" I said, "where do you get pills in this country? has Morison made his way into Persia!" "We pick them up at the door," said he, "they are chicken's pills." He had, in fact, been swallowing a quantity of fowl's dung, which it cost me all my skill to eject. I did so, and the man was grateful with his "alhamdulillah," praise be to God.

CHAPTER VI.

ROYAL FAVOUR IN PERSIA.

THE precariousness of court favour was strongly evinced during my stay at Tehran, in the temporary disgrace of "Zhorab Khan," a great favourite of his Majesty. "Zhorab Khan" was formerly a Georgian slave, but was raised by degrees to the high rank of Chief of the Andaroon, or manager of the harem department—no trifling undertaking this in the royal establishment.

Much of the duplicity and meanness of the Persian character may be attributed to that system of intrigue by which greatness is attained and rank supported. The slave imbibes with his mother's milk cunning, treachery, and all the evil seeds of

moral degeneracy; and there can be no nobility of nature under such circumstances.

This Khan, of whom I have just spoken, had reached the pinnacle of greatness; but having climbed the steep ascent by all those tortuous means so peculiar to the Persian character, the rank seeds of his birth sprang up in all sorts of tyranny, oppression, and cruelty. He was haughty, overbearing, even to his superiors, and to a degree that they would no longer submit to. Basking in the sunshine of royal favour, and decorated with the highest honours, he one day committed a gross insult on the Prince "Ali Shah," who called aloud for revenge. This clamour reached the ear of majesty, and nothing would pacify the Prince but the immediate disgrace of the favourite. A bastinado was accordingly ordered, and eight hundred sticks awarded. The once imperious Khan was prostrated at the feet of those "faroshis," who yesterday trembled in his presence, and he underwent the pain and indignity of the meanest culprit.

But the Shah's clemency melted towards him, even during his sufferings; and on the following day, as if in compensation for what he had undergone, the King clothed him in his own royal robe,

girded him with his imperial girdle, and raised him to a higher pinnacle of greatness than ever, again proclaiming, "This is the man whom the King delighteth to honour." The admiring audience again bowed down before him ;—no stain nor feeling of disgrace marked the royal slave ; his breath of yesterday was rank with dishonour, his breath of to-day is perfumed with the monarch's favour, and the hissing of scoffers was converted to the shouts of sycophants.

This was by no means a solitary instance of the precariousness of the royal favour. A Khan, high in rank in the Shah's household, and who had drunk deeply of the imperial liberality, was disgraced by some want of punctuality to his duties. He was stripped almost to the skin, mounted on a donkey, and, tail in hand, was thus paraded around the town to the wondering multitude. The next day he quietly resumed his duties, and was as unconscious of disgrace as the "faroshs" who conducted him.

Many instances may be adduced of his Majesty's sportive use of power, if I may so say. One of them I will mention in the history of "Abul Hassan Khan," twice ambassador at the court of St. James's,

and still remembered in some of the high circles of London society, whose amusing letter, written on his return to Persia—a sort of reminiscence of his visit to London—has I believe been printed. He was the nephew of “Hadji Ibrahim Khan,” the celebrated minister of “Agha Mahomed Shah,” and of his successor the late “Futtee Ali Shah.” The minister having fallen into disgrace with the King, the royal displeasure generally follows those of his household. This is so common to the oriental court, that the victim is hurled from the pinnacle of grandeur, with all his family and friends, to the lowest depths of debasement and adversity.

Amidst the whirlwind of this fury, “Abul Hassan” was thrown into prison, stripped of all his dignities, and was subsequently driven to take sanctuary in the mausoleum at “Koom,” always held sacred even against the despotism of the King. Escaping from thence, he travelled to Mecca and to Calcutta, having some introduction to the Governor-general of India. There he spent three years in visiting the oriental clime, having acquired the different languages, Arabic, Turkish, Hindoostanee, and English in a slight degree. Having learnt that the King of Persia had pardoned him, he returned to

his native country, where he was most graciously received by his Majesty. His "face had been whitened," and he now basked in the sunshine of the royal favour.

Such are the varied fortunes of the sons of Iran; yesterday the "felek" or bastinado, to-day the "khelaat," or dress of honour; nay, I was told that the rope was once around his neck, ten thousand toman was bid for his head, and that it was bought in at that price. Such was the *on dit* of Tehran, but I must confess that I am a little sceptical on this part of his history.

His Majesty afterwards appointed him ambassador extraordinary to the court of St. James's, and in 1809 he accompanied Mr. Morier in that capacity to London. Their adventures are ludicrously sketched in "Hadji Baba in London."

On his return, his first audience with the King, as described to me, was very amusing. "My eyes are enlightened at seeing you," said the King, "your place has long been empty, your face is whitened, and your consequence increased." "May your condescension never be less," said the Khan, seeking to rub his forehead at the gate of almighty splendour. "The firmament possesses but one

sun, the world but one king, your slave is less than the least; what lamp can shine in the presence of the sun?" but compliments were poor feeding for the King; his first thought was about the "Pescush," or presents; what was the weal or woe of his Majesty's empire compared to this! "Bechesm my eyes as yours," said the Khan. The presents were laid at the King's feet. Again and again the Khan swore he had no more, "berysh y Shah," by the King's beard, still there were others to be found. The Persian game of duplicity thus kept up between the Shah and the Khan was at length won by the former, and the Khan, nearly ruined, was turned adrift to recruit his finances, by the practice of his tyranny over those whom fortune had placed in his way. The King subsequently raised him to the dignity of Khan, and conferred upon him the first class of the order of the "Lion and Sun."

The King appointed him a second time on a similar mission to England; and it is related, that, in order to indemnify himself for the royal spoliations of the last journey, the ambassador returned well charged with merchandize, taking advantage of the King's name to pass them through Turkey

free of duties, and to levy for beasts of burthen in his own country, under the "sadir," or royal order for passing on his Majesty's effects free of expense. The wily Khan was prepared with numerous presents to lay at the feet of "the King of Kings," remembering his Majesty's greediness on the last occasion; but it so happened he had heard of the ambassador's loads of merchandise which were making their way free of "gumrook," or duty, and travelling as "presents on the behalf of the King," and had determined to appropriate them all to himself. He chose to be absent from Tehran when the ambassador approached that city, and commanded that he should join him immediately on his arrival, and secretly gave orders to the gholams that the whole of the loads travelling as presents for the King should be housed in the royal stores; so, whilst the ambassador was basking in the sunshine of royal favour, his merchandise and presents underwent royal sequestration. Not a word could be said, as the Khan never dared claim any of his effects.

Thus fraud upon fraud was practised by the ambassador and his royal master. Persian duplicity outreached by Persian *finesse*. The King was

too much for the Khan, and this royal *ruse* was the standing jest of the Shah and his courtiers.

In 1813 "Abul Hassan Khan" was sent to "Gulistan," to conclude a peace with the plenipotentiaries from Russia, the undefined terms of which led to the late war between the two countries. The following year he went as ambassador extraordinary to the court of St. Petersburg, where he resided some time, and returned with the Russian ambassador to Tehran. His Majesty was now more liberal to him, having, it is said, presented him with an ode to his praise, of his own composing, and also gave him his portrait set in diamonds.

The Khan wrote a narrative of his travels, to which the King gave the title of the "Hairet Nameh," or the "Book of Wonders," and well deserving his Majesty's title given it.

When I saw the hurly burly Khan at the "Evening Salaam" I was much struck with his corpulent change since I first saw him in England—he had become a second Falstaff. I learnt that he continues to receive an annuity from the English government, for which he betrays their interests in every possible way, and is the avowed enemy of the country. He was but little respected by the

Shah or the courtiers; his meanness was notorious, and he was proverbially false. Of the former, an instance came before me; and in proof of the latter, no one would trust him. Even for a Persian he was spoken of with contempt and disgust. He has now attained seventy-five years of age, unloved, unrespected, and will die unregretted.

The order of the "Lion and Sun," to which I have alluded as having been conferred on Abul Hassan Khan, is the only order of knighthood known in Persia. It was very anciently the royal insignia of the land of Iran, and is supposed to have been adopted as a trophy of victory. The coins more than six hundred years ago bear Sol's figure in the constellation of Leo, and the lion couchant. Their banners are embroidered with it, the standard being surmounted with the hand of Ali. Of this order there are three classes; the first is thought but little of, and is rendered very cheap by the low grade of the recipients; the second is respectable; the third is most eagerly sought after by khans, courtiers, and foreign ambassadors. All the British envoys to the court of Tehran have been thus honoured.

Gold and silver medals are sometimes given in

Persia to those who have distinguished themselves ; but generally the royal firmaun consists only of a large sheet of vellum, bedizened with gold letters, emblazoned with lions and suns of all climes, birds and flowers very tastefully arranged, and most exquisitely written, from one of which I obtained the following copy. The person to whom this gracious favour of "the King of Kings" is addressed, raises it to his forehead, and then it is read aloud in the most respectful silence, all standing until the contents are finished. I am not aware that any precise terms of the royal firmaun apply generally, since so much must depend on the fertile genius of the Meerza who draws it up, on the quantity of "chum y chum," or flattery that he means to throw in, and on the distinguished character of the recipient.

Royal Firmaun conferring the Order of the "Lion and Sun."

"In the name of the Holy God" (In the seal there is written "Power of Providence;" the seal of the state of this century, in the reign of Futteh Ali Shah.)—The state resembles the divine nature; it orders as follows:—

"From the day that the Architect of Providence made visible the position and the firm ground of the state, and finished with a profound sketch the plan of the house for the state upon the chart of his will, and that his firmness had raised into infinity the first of the straight pillars, while he fixed the rule of our eternal

happiness, and drew also the immeasurable lines of his consistency, by sending down the rays of his almighty power, appeared in great splendour. Now our direct intention and will is, and we have in the centre of our well-inclined heart determined that he who stays under the shade of this eternal state, and who with persevering exertion ascends the steps of zeal in this our state, shall be promoted to further honours, and be dignified by the grant of an act of our gracious benevolence. From the motion of our sovereign grace, we do convey to him our farther honourable distinction, that the most high titled, high sounding, the most illustrious from his station, the most wise, the constant, the all penetrating, the brave, the confident, arrived at our just court by particular desire, the high praised, the high standing, the wise, the particularly wise selection of illustrious Christendom, who, like a circle in the service of both high states, holds the head of obedience on the earth of submission—we will to distinguish him with greater honour, and confer upon him the order of the ‘Lion and Sun,’ with dian onds, which magna distinguish faithful servants in Persia, in order that he may diligently apply himself to the service of both states, and manifest still greater zeal in cementing their friendly agreement.

— It is hereby ordered that the high praised, esteemed, and happy jurists of my blessed chancery do register and acknowledge the grant of this order. Written in the month Hegira.”

Undersigned by seven or eight ministers.

The only titles in Persia are Khans and Meerzas. The former is not hereditary; the latter, if following the name, means *Prince*, as “Abbas Meerza;” if preceding the name, as “Meerza Abbas,” it means a writer or secretary. The *surname* is not used in Persia.

CHAPTER VII.

THE "BAGY SEFFRE."

THIS "Garden of Delight," is situated about one "fursek," or an hour from Tabreez; it was the once favourite residence of Abbas Meerza, and is certainly the most respectable thing of the kind I have seen in Persia. The sort of mineral ground which we go over to reach this country palace, is denuded of any thing like vegetation; it was vomited up as it were in hasty confusion during a tremendous earthquake in 1559, when half of the city of Tabreez was engulfed. The earth yawued; mosques, bazaars, and people were hurried into one grave; and the ruined monuments

remain a memorial of the catastrophe. That of Sultan Kazan mosque is the finest ruin.

Half-buried columns, and mounds of rubbish, extend nearly three miles around the modern city. Only a fragment remains of the mosque Mesj-Ali, which stands at the corner of the ark or citadel, bearing a few coloured tiles, and Koran inscriptions, to witness to its former splendour. This, which is now the boundary, was once the centre of the great city, and further remains of streets and houses are to be traced in many directions.

But the most remarkable remains are immense blocks of black granite, some of them having rams' heads and sphynxs, and other hieroglyphics carved on them; others, quite flat, bear long inscriptions. These blocks lay about in the utmost confusion, and half buried in the ground, as they were left by the earthquake; for nothing seems to have been done to level the surface in the immediate neighbourhood of Tabreez since this awful calamity. I have been assured that these blocks of granite bear date long previous to the Mahomedan era; sure I am that their inscriptions would puzzle even an Oldbuck himself.

There is no country perhaps where earthquakes are more frequent than in Persia. In the hot seasons the shocks may be said to be almost daily, and I have been told by Ferengees, long residing there, that they have often stood at the window ready to jump out when the house may be tumbling about them. Hence their buildings are partly subterranean, and all of mud, the least likely to crack.

On the day of my arrival, and while smoking my first pipe of repose, I noticed the china basins knocking against each other. "Oh! it is only an earthquake; nothing when you are used to it,"—was the reply to my enquiry as to the cause.

The way over this denuded ground was varied by gardens and villages, richly watered, and the largest streams having generally poplar plantations, the green foliage of which is a great relief to the eye amid the sunburnt walls and monotonous mud regions. At length arriving at a very respectable pile of building, this was announced to me as the "Bagy Seffre."

Various terraces at the entrance contained baths and other subterranean buildings, which were intricate and decaying. I traversed many of them,

and bounding up the steps, it was very refreshing to look over the walls, if only to take a peep into the "garden of delight," redolent as it appeared to be of fruits and flowers of every sort. But peeping over the walls will not do for me; so I moved on to the principal entrance, and thundering at the gateway, sought for admission into this seeming Eden of delights. "Sabre Koon,"—"Stop," said my attendant, "although the prince is absent, yet I believe his harem are there; if so, you cannot be admitted." Fortunately, they had all taken flight the previous day, so I ran up the terrace, snuffing in the flowery sweets, which in great abundance were "wasting their fragrance on the desert air." Here was

"Laburnum rich in streaming gold, syringa ivory pure,
The scented and the scentless rose,"

and I know not what besides. The trellised vinery hung over the paths, rich in offerings of white and purple fruit, the abundance of which almost impeded my way.

There is a formality in the style of the Persian gardens rather inconsistent with our English taste, and any thing but true to nature; formal walks,

straight alleys, and so on. The mud walls were very respectable, inclosing I should think about twenty acres of ground.

The gardens were numerous, all on ascending ground. These I traversed, until I came to what may be deemed the palace, which is all mud; though within, it was certainly plastered and ornamented. The "deewan kaneh," or reception room, was still carpetted,—this being the only Persian furniture; and the "nummed," which the prince had occupied the day before, was pointed out to me as of curious workmanship. It appeared to be a thick felt, stamped with a border pattern. Here his highness squats by day, and sometimes sleeps by night; one cannot call it *sitting*; for he puts his feet as it were into the pockets of his "shal-wars," or trousers. Here, too, he prays. From the same spot he invokes the Prophet and plays the monarch.

On the walls of this apartment were painted some strange figures—strong in colouring, stronger in grimace; with straight knees, square arms, and stiff necks. The countenances of the attendants were all of the beseeching kind; by which I mean humility ultra profound, as much as to say, "the

very breath we draw is not our own, it is all of the prince's bounty." The subject of the chase is a great favourite with the Persian artists. Their heroes are all "Rustams;" they are always spearing the wild boar, or engaged in some such gallant pastime.

They have no idea whatever of perspective, consequently the distant groups are treading down those on the foreground, and the hind legs of the horses intended to be miles off are upon the necks of the rear riders.

As I was obviously struck with those singular combinations, some of the many "faroshs" who were about, asked me if there were any such paintings in my own country. "Certainly not," said I, and they evidently accepted my reply as a proof of the superiority of the arts in Persia.

The Persians ornament very beautifully with coloured tiles and glass, formed in medallions and fancy figures, sometimes with Koran inscriptions, so exquisitely done in the Arabic characters, that no European engraver could excel them.

Their carpets have a richness of colouring and softness of texture quite unrivalled; and they

cannot be soiled, as every one leaves his slippers at the door.

The deficiency of furniture is made up for by the "taukja," as they call it, in the walls. These are a sort of blank windows, which form shelves for the deposit of China basins and other ornaments. I never saw any building, however inferior, without the "taukja:" even the stables and "kaveh kanehs," or entrances, must be so ornamented.

The windows, though large on the whole, are divided into small squares or compartments, filled sometimes with coloured glass, sometimes with paper only; glass being but of recent introduction into Persia. The buildings have invariably the flat roof, still covered with mud; but the bricklayer will turn arches, with a dexterity which would astonish an English artisan, and without any centre whatever. I have seen them building the dome of a bazaar almost equal in size to that of St. Paul's. They plant the bricks most rapidly, and in a cement so strong, that it is immediately fixed without any chance of disturbance. Here I first saw what may be termed the *stue* arch to great perfection.

I ran over the different rooms of the princes' residence, even down to the "zyr y zemeens," or cellars. The chief features were formality and mud, at which I laughed inwardly and praised outwardly. "Had the 'padi shah,' in my own country any thing to be compared to this?" asked the "peish khidmet," or head servant. This was taxing my complimentary powers rather too far, so I moved "the previous question," which was to depart; and hastening through another garden, I found numerous "takhts," or sleeping places, being large wooden platforms, raised about three feet from the ground. They were planted about in different directions, and seemingly in great confusion, as though the eunuch the day before had given but short notice for the departure of the prince's harem. Just above was a large tank of water, which it is so refreshing to look upon in this arid country, and from it rippled down in varied streams the supplies to the different gardens.

I walked through these pleasant places again and again, my senses of sight and smell revelling in the scene, amidst the fruits and flowers of the *parterre*. To me there is no luxury in Persia

comparable to these gardens, of which they say, "Behold these sweet groves, beautiful gardens, and flowing streams. Is it not a spot for the abode of heroes? The ground resembles velvet, and the air breathes perfume—you would say that the rose had imparted its sweets to the waters of the rivulet—the stalk of the lily bends under the weight of the flower, and the whole grove is charmed with the fragrance of the rose-bush—from this moment till time is no more, may the borders of these banks resemble the bowers of Paradise."

The gardens around Tabreez are very extensive. My custom was at an early hour to ride on horse-back through these extensive grounds, planted with the choicest fruits and other produce. They are left open to the stranger, although belonging to many proprietors; their boundaries are merely a row of trees, or a drain of water.

The Persian mode of irrigation is ingenious and complete, and the soil most prodigal. Their peaches, melons, and grapes are of a flavour unknown in Europe. These fruits form much of the food of the natives, and droves of donkeys laden with it are constantly on the way to the city.

Then there are the olive grounds, very extensive; and the luxury of inhaling, while on horseback, the fragrance of the blossoms, which is very evanescent, in a thicket of flowers (if I may so say) for miles around, must be felt to be understood.

It is customary to form parties, and to spend days in the gardens, pitching tents, &c., but this is by no means necessary, since the night air gives no humidity. Give a "panabad," or sixpence, to the proprietor, and you may remain in the garden all day, and fill yourself with fruit, on which the Persians feed so abundantly.

The prince had other large gardens near the city, to which he occasionally resorted; but more particularly his household. When I saw them they had been suffering from "Russian blight;" the trees were cut down, and even the buildings destroyed for fuel by those "Scythian destroyers," (as Napoleon called them at Moscow), during their temporary occupation of Tabreez.

There was an English association with the "bagy seffre," which interested me much. Here drew his last breath our late envoy, Sir John Macdonald Kennier, so much and deservedly

respected in Persia. He was the prince's confidential friend, and was frequently referred to by him irrespective of English affairs. He was the great agent for bringing about the peace of Tourkamanchai, with the Russians, and for appeasing their anger when the Persian populace murdered their ambassador. Quiet and unobtrusive, yet firm and discriminating, he performed his official duties with unmixed satisfaction to both English and Persians.

The prince's regard for Sir John Kennier was shown on frequent occasions; nor could he manifest it in a greater degree than by allowing him to draw his last breath, as it were, on his own mat. This from a Mahomedan prince to a "kaffir," or infidel, was an extraordinary proof of esteem.

The Elchee, (then Colonel Macdonald only), was kept for a long time on the threshold of Persia; for, as being merely the Honourable Company's envoy, the King refused to receive the mission. At length he was invited *over* the threshold, and on the 7th September 1826 his Majesty most graciously received him, he being then in camp. In the month of June 1830 the envoy succumbed to a long and wasting illness of

six months, closing his official career with dignity and honour to himself and his country, and to the great regret of all who knew him. He had been distinguished in the literary world by an intelligent narrative of travels in Asia Minor, and was said, some time before his death, to have been preparing for the press a history of Persia. Highly respected by the Honourable Company for his services, they were rewarded by his sovereign with the honour of knighthood, which was bestowed just in time to enable him to descend to the tomb "Sir John Macdonald Kinnier."

I found from the Colonel's passport, that courteous reception from the "Count d'Erivansky," (General Paskevitch), which facilitated my travels, and converted difficulties into enjoyments. "For the Colonel's sake," said he, "I will do all that you may require." The Elchee's remains, at his particular request, were conveyed to the Armenian monastery of Echmiazin, at Erivan, and a monument, prepared in London, was lately erected over his tomb.

In the valley below ran the river Haji, to be traced only by a forest of garden ground skirting its banks. On pursuing my way down a beautiful

valley, which Spring enriches with her luxuriance, and Autumn with her abundance, shut in by barren and arid hills, which form a fanciful amphitheatre, and on a mound, whether natural or artificial I cannot tell, stands the once round towered outwork of a fortress called Rushedia, in tolerable preservation. Here I found some little scope for the antiquary, and could trace the inner and outer walls, with the dry ditch, and the bases of other towers, with the citadel in the middle, preserving at least its ancient form, and some of its masonry.

To dive into the heights and depths of this formerly strong bulwark was quite beyond me, amidst piles of perishing bricks, and masses of crumbling masonry, mixing with the earth from which they were formed. The situation is commanding, the positions well chosen to check any intruders from the valley below, and behind the fortress, nature has thrown up such a barrier as almost to claim cloud acquaintance.

I could speculate, and calculate, and ruminate as I stood in the centre tower, but all to no purpose. I could come to no conclusion, by enquiry or otherwise, as to the origin of the fortress.

Some people attribute it to the Turks; but I think it must have been built before the Turks were known in this part of the world, almost before the birth of Ishmael, their great progenitor, for I never saw such perfect ruins.

Descending to the lower regions of the spot, I found one or two large mouths of brick-work. These openings I understood to be subterranean ways to a large mosque, about five miles distant. It was with the greatest difficulty I could advance about five yards; and the only thing worthy of notice, was the easy beauty of the arches, and the extremely fresh appearance of the bricks, which looked, after the lapse of perhaps two thousand years, to have been planted there only yesterday. I have already alluded to the modern brick arches of this country, which appear to me to be the very perfection of masonry.

Hastening my return from Rushedia, I had to pass the ruins of the mosque Sultan Kazan, which is about a mile from Tabreez. This was, no doubt, formerly one of the distinguished quarters of the city. My former explorings had begotten me a taste for time-worn rubbish, and the crumbings of ages, so I must run over the

anatomy of this. Its fine ruined arches, rent and torn asunder by the dreadful earthquake before alluded to, were yet in perpendicular, although by a terrible yawn of the ground on which they stood there was a fissure in the grand dome sufficient to intimidate me from standing under it. The front arch was in tolerable preservation, well proportioned, and faced with coloured tiles, fancifully inlaid with the Arabic characters. The walls were of a prodigious thickness, having been lined with the Tabreez marble, immense blocks of which were laying about with the rubbish.

The various fragments yet standing, and masses of brick-work detached, and threatening other falls, bespoke this mosque to have been a once lofty and imposing structure; and from what my eye could compass, and my imagination fathom, by linking together the different arches and fragments alluded to, I think it would not have disgraced even Palladio himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

A VISIT TO SULIMANIA.

ON my way to Tehran I had to pass through this pretty village, having made various stages to it, some of which I will notice.

Early in the morning I was on a fine road leading to Armakaneh, a very large village, and nine hours from our last station. Here I found a splendid "menzil," or post-house for strangers, and plenty of water gushing out from its soil in all directions. This is the source of all their riches, and an abundance of corn and other produce proclaimed the extent of those riches.

On the following day I left the village, by a tremendous pass, which is sometimes considered

dangerous for travellers; the way, which was afterwards good, was strewn with flourishing villages and well watered valleys. I need scarcely say that in Persia, what we denominate roads are totally unknown. The paths which lead from station to station are established by custom, convenience, or the caprice of the traveller, where, in a semi-barbarous country, "the world is all before him where to choose." So capricious had they been in this direction, that I found it quite a series of cross roads, leading to the important town of Zenjan.

This town was walled, and contained extensive bazaars and caravanseries. I had to traverse the former; as in almost all the cities in Persia the bazaars are the high roads through them. I was an object of much curiosity with the rude natives, and must confess that I felt rather uncomfortable at their searching gaze, having only servants with me, and the people so unaccustomed to see a Ferenghee stranger.

Resting that night at the caravansery, I was impatient to escape, as it were, from the rough lodging of a Persian khan, and summoning my followers, I issued from the gate at an early hour. We were well armed, an indispensable precaution

when travelling through this wild country; the being unarmed is an invitation to attack.

I could now again breathe freely on the extensive plains of Sultaniah. It was studded with ruined villages. The first which I arrived at was without a single inhabitant; and some others had only small groups of half clad peasantry, looking the very personification of misery. The dome of the tomb of Ismael Khouda Benda is to be seen from hence at a great distance, so much so that I fancied I should never reach it.

This imposing structure has very little of its original magnificence remaining. The cupola rests on an octangular base, and is about a hundred feet high. The gates are all down; but over them were galleries, leading from the inner to the outer part of the building. The interior is in good keeping, having here and there some beautiful Arabic inscriptions in gilded characters. But the saint's rest is wofully desecrated by all comers. We breakfasted in one of the niches or chapels, and the horses in another.

On this plain stood formerly the capital of Persia, and the residence of its kings, until the time of Abbas the Great, who made Ispahan the capital of

his empire. In the time of Chardin, Sultaniah was still a city, and surrounded with walls, but now nothing can be more desolate than this waste; the only exception is the modern building of a summer residence for the late Shah, which I visited.

The Shah generally formed a camp in the summer season. The extensive pasturage would feed an army of horses. The way to Khoramdereh was through a flat uninteresting country, poorly watered, and inhabited by the wild Eleaut tribes, in their black tents; they are seemingly perfectly inoffensive. These nomades desert their villages in the summer, and follow the pasturage with their flocks. The soil seems to belong to the first comers, and the inhabitants are so few as compared with the extensive territory of Persia, that all can be fed at small expense of labour.

Koramdereh, or "the happy valley," is a large village, embowered in its own woods, and watered by a copious stream. It has a very interesting effect from the neighbouring hills. Proceeding on to Kerishkeen, some villages intersect the vast plain which leads to it, as the river takes its course; and again the road was deemed inse-

cure, in consequence of the rocky passes, which are always favourable for the interruption of travellers, and give a wild romantic feature to the country. This is a Turcoman village, and I had some difficulty to get accommodated in a wretched "menzil;" this being out of the regular way to Tehran.

The approach to Kazvine was varied and interesting; the most so of any on the route. The way was watry, with pretty villages here and there, and the busy natives were gathering their crops. Their custom is to lay a couple of sheaves at the feet of travellers, as a sign of welcome; but it is intended more as a levy on their liberality: trust the Adjemis for worming the coins out of the pocket! there are no people more ingenious at it.

A smiling prospect pervaded the whole scene, bespeaking health and prosperity. The large city of Kazvine was visible at a great distance. On approaching, its extensive vineyards at the outskirts showed abundant fruit, although very destitute of water. I plunged into the wretched bazaars, through which my way led to the caravansery, which afforded but miserable accommodations.

I found the natives more surprised than ever at

the sight of a Ferengée stranger, and more uncivil in their gaping. Kazvine was formerly a very large city, and is said to have been the royal residence. It was founded in the third century, and was formerly called "Djemal Abad," or the beautiful city, but now its beauty is turned into ashes; for I never saw more wretched bazaars. Its extensive ruins were occasioned by an earthquake. The roofs in many parts are merely branches of trees. Thus much for the Persian's respect for posterity.

The plain is most extensive on which this city is planted. It is situated at the foot of Mount Elwend, a branch of the Taurus, which separates Irak Adjemi from the districts of Hyrcania. Even in Chardin's days it reckoned nearly a hundred thousand inhabitants, though now reduced to less than half that amount. Its vineyards are extensive and unenclosed. I rode through miles of this ground, and noticed that the vine grows about six feet high, without any support, and that the fruit was excellent.

As I went over the extensive plains the next morning, nothing could be more desolate than their arid parched appearance, without any thing

for the eye to rest upon but the long line of "kenauts," the Persian means of irrigation. These are aqueducts, made by a succession of small wells, at a hundred yards distance from each other, their depth being determined by the level of the soil. They are connected by a channel below, sufficiently capacious for a man to clear it. These wells are begun at the spring head, and conveyed from an immense distance to the fields and villages. The earth thrown up from them is all that the eye has to glance at. It marks the direction and length of the subterranean aqueducts. This mode of irrigation is attributed to a very ancient date in Persia, even to Houshang, the second king of that country.

After travelling through the sandy desert for four or five hours, the ground entirely denuded of tree or bush, I halted at one of these water holes, by the side of which our wallet being opened, both man and beast were refreshed. The remainder of my way to Kishlock was the most trying portion of my journey, it being out of the line of the "kenauts," consequently no water could be obtained; and what made it the more trying was, the effect of the mirage, which fre-

quently presented me with what I took to be fine basins of water, when, on hastening to quench my thirst, I found nothing but basins of sand.

The deceptions are astonishing in these extensive plains; and not merely the watery ones; for the dazzling lustre of the mid-day sun, its eddying rays fiercely burning up the thirsty soil, betray the imagination to all sorts of vagaries.

My weariness of body, as I turned in the saddle, seeking some new position for ease, harassed by the monotony of a scene which seemed to have no end; the continued disappointments, as sometimes one of the party would cry out, "Aubast," "there is water," and off we galloped, but on nearing it found nothing but sand: all this made the present the most trying day I had ever experienced in Persia. On advancing to seeming objects, such as villages or gardens, the nearer we came, the faster they receded. I could catch nothing, and therefore gave up the attempt in gloomy sulkiness.

These phenomena certainly vary the tameness of the scene, and I could occasionally laugh as the "will-o-the-wisp" danced before me. Even after frequent disappointments, I sometimes felt so sure

as to be determined to attain my object ; but I got laughed at by my train, who being more accustomed to Persian deceptions than myself, (the mirage included) would cry out, "Hych ast sahib," "It is nothing."

At length the distant view of the village induced me to quicken my pace, that I might not fall off from pure exhaustion. Even here, however, no water was for a long time to be found, and I was glad to drink from a brook in which the horses' legs were then being washed.

At Kishlock, a small camp was formed of the Russian battalion under Samson Sarang, about twelve hundred troops in all ; these being deserters from Russia, and long employed in the Persian service.

The next morning the drum beat at an early hour for the march of the battalion on the way to join the Prince's army in Khorassan. I studiously avoided falling in with them, by delaying my march for some hours. The misery of encountering a military detachment in Persia may be likened to a visit of locusts, and many are the villages devastated by the freebooters, who have unbridled license to help themselves to supplies.

I have seen houses destroyed that they may take the wood for fuel, and falling into their track, I could scarcely procure here the necessary supplies of bread and water; and as to my resting-place, it was the brick-floored vault of an old caravansery, filled with vermin and filth. Quartersing the troops in Persia means that all are to provide themselves as best suits them, and when they determine on occupying a house, they turn out the possessor; who, with his wives and family, may go into the streets. They seize or burn his furniture, and in reply to his appeals against this hard usage, he is consoled by either hearing that it is not to last long, or by having his heels turned up for the bastinado!

At break of day I was in my saddle, and with my long train led the way to Sulimania. There is something of a lonely desolation which comes over the mind when travelling in this wild country, every feature of which is so peculiarly its own, with its ruined villages, rocky passes, and boundless plains, giving it all the appearance of savage life; the wild native starting up here and there, eying the Ferengce stranger with the struggling feeling of curiosity and cupidity, half

inclined to pounce upon his prey, but checked by that confiding security which claims his hospitality and protection.

Suddenly I found myself environed by a host of armed troopers. Besides the Russian battalion, there was the Tourkaman, the Koords and the Eleauts of the different tribes. Their miscellaneous costumes and equipments beggar all description. Although they have nominally the royal pay, they must mount and equip themselves; hence that heterogeneous *materiel* of which a Persian army is composed. Almost all the population of Persia is armed; there is, therefore, no difficulty of outfit in this department. The King summons the chiefs of the tribes, who must appear at camp with their cohort ready to take the field. The Eleauts, and some others, pay no other tribute.

Discipline is very severe under the immediate eye of the commandant, as I had once an opportunity of judging at the camp of Sardaha. The victim (a deserter) was brought up and judged, and orders immediately given for punishment. He was first beat over the mouth with a large stick by the faroshs, until his teeth were

knocked in; then his beard was cut off, — a great disgrace in Persia. His hands were then tied behind, and his heels turned up for the bastinado; and most unmercifully were the sticks applied, and many broken. Not only the nails, but almost the toes were knocked off. The sticks not being deemed sufficiently strong, thongs were brought, and the bastinado renewed. On loosing his hands, his fingers were disabled. A rope was then tied around his body, and he was dragged over the rough stones to some distance up a mountain, and dreadfully lacerated. Here he was to remain for execution the next day.

Presenting as bold a front as I could, I kept in the centre of these ruffian-looking troops, thinking that there was less chance of being robbed in the midst of them than by keeping in the rear. I was an object of the greatest interest, many probably never having seen a Ferengée stranger before. I soon recognised some of the Malesghird tribe, with their shields and lances, looking as fierce as when they threatened to take me a head shorter in their own country.

After about half an hour's ride in the midst of them, the heat and dust became intolerable; so

I suddenly went off into a neighbouring ravine, and bade adieu to the gallant troops of Abbas Meerza.

Melting under the mid-day sun, and searching every corner of my saddle for a position of ease, I entered the lonely spot of Sulimania, watered and wooded to my heart's content. The outskirts showed many crumbling walls and tumble-down buildings, which bespoke much of the spoil of time; and as I entered what was once a caravansery, I nauseated the wretched accommodation, and soon made my escape to the "bauleh kaneh" of the entrance to the palace.

As I lay stretched on my carpet, smoking my pipe of repose, a profusion of the finest apricots, grapes, and sundry fruits was laid before me. I was soon invited into the palace, where a room had been cleaned out, and a carpet spread for my reception. The room was open to the garden, and it gave me a most luxurious rest. Such an Elysium I fancied even "The Thousand and One Nights" had never presented. The gardens were extensive, and the fruits of every sort so abundant, that the look of it served much to satiate all appetite. The palace had been built by Futtee

Ali Shah, in honour of the birth of a son, Suliman, at this place; hence its name of Sulimania.

In the "deewan kaneh," or grand reception room, were full-length portraits of his Majesty and family, including the young prince. I am always much amused at these displays of the Persian art; the stately rigidity of the monarch and the "shah zadehs," or princes, decked in their oriental jewellery, has a most *imposing* effect. On the opposite wall was the eunuch Agha Mahommed Shah, and his courtiers, forming altogether the finest gallery of Persian paintings that I had seen. I have already alluded to the rigidity of posture and fixedness of muscle which so distinguish the arts in this country.

I had never found any repose so agreeable at the time as that I enjoyed at Sulimania. The birds carolled, the breeze murmured, the fountains bubbled; and as I lay upon my nummed, I seemed to realise the description of Ferdoosi: "The ground is a perfect silk, and the air is scented with musk."

This royal residence is on a large scale, and comprises a high tower of observation, from whence the prisoners of the Harem were per-

mitted to survey the surrounding country. The baths were fine, the stabling good, and the Harem Kaneh so extensive, that I lost myself in its intricacies. This was once a favourite resort of the late Shah, and its proximity to Tehran (only eight hours) made it more attractive; but latterly the royal caprice had veered to some other point.

Whether from extreme fatigue, exhaustion from thirst, or debility from hunger, I thought that I had never found a respite from these three angry feelings so agreeable as at Sulimania. My bottle had been spent in the desert, (it is customary to carry one of wood,) and I had been sensibly touched with the feelings of Hagar, though not with her despair. Here the ripe fruit dropped, as it were, into my mouth, as I walked under the trellised vinery; and the sudden transition from want to abundance, from weariness to ease, seemed to me somewhat of the magic of Aladdin. All enjoyments are comparative; to be keenly relished they must be earned. The slothful voluptuary, "who knows no fatigue but that of idleness," is a stranger to that stimulating pleasure which the sweat of the brow or the labour of the muscles gives to the peasant or the mechanic.

CHAPTER IX.

TOORKOMANCHAI.

I WAS much interested by my short stay at this village. It was here that the treaty of peace was signed between Persia and Russia, in 1828. My companion was present at the time, in the suite of the late British envoy, who was the principal means of bringing it about, as deputed by Abbas Meerza. Our Ketkodem was very loquacious and entertaining on the subject, whose house the Russians had occupied some ten or twelve days. My companion took the Colonel's place, and I took the nummed of the General-in-chief, Paskevitch (Count d'Erivansky).

It was with considerable difficulty that the

affairs were adjusted, which were to restore perfect amity and everlasting friendship, to be broken only at the first convenience, between the "Padi Shah of all the Russias," and the "Cousin of the Sun and Moon." More than once did the General rise from his seat, and declare that he would go on to Tehran, to which there could have been no opposition offered; but by the Colonel's "head of prudence he was guided to the line of moderation;" and after long and tedious negotiations, precisely at twelve o'clock at night did the cannon "bruit it to the heavens" that peace was re-established between the two ever-enduring empires of Persia and Russia.

Then came the rejoicings, the embracings, powder and shot exchanged for pilau and champagne; and the sturdy combatants, ready before to draw the sword of contention, were now seen together smoking the pipe of friendship.

Our venerable host, or "rysh soofeid," with his long white beard, was fast declining into his native dust; asthma had seized him, and his bellows were leaking at every pore. The very temperate habits of the Persian peasantry, to whom alcohol is unknown, leads them on through

a long vale of time. There is scarcely one in a hundred amongst them who knows his own age ; for there are no registries of births, either public or private. I have often asked them the question, and they will range sometimes from seventy to a hundred years.

Our host seemed to feel the pride of having assisted at these negociations. "Mashallah," said he, with all the importance of having witnessed it. He was full of anecdotes respecting the Russians, and spoke as loudly as he could of their liberality, which I will do them the justice to say I find to be their invariable character wherever I go, with friend or foe, in all countries. They are not only just in their monetary transactions, but highly *liberal*. I have heard this both on the continent and in the east.

Passing the day in our village, at lazy length, with the inexhaustible "tchibook;" quarrelling with the dogs, or visiting the natives; it is sometimes rather difficult to "feather the wings of time." What a plague are these said dogs to Persian travel; their number, their unappeasable ferocity, their canine jealousy at the sight of a Ferengée stranger! On moving off one's carpet,

the first question always is, "Where are the dogs?" then, whip in hand, you must battle through them every inch of ground. In the large towns they herd together in parties, on the walls, at the gates, and other prominent stations, perhaps forty or fifty in a herd, headed by a small cur; when he begins, the herd take the signal to pursue any stranger, man or dog—for they never allow the intrusion of a member of any other herd. They are useful as scavengers, but a great annoyance to travellers. The Mahomedans have a prejudice in their favour; I don't know what; but you dare not kill a dog. If there be any complaint, it must be made to the "beglerbeg," or mayor of the town, and he receives it with as much formality as if it were against any other inhabitant.

Emerging from our village at break of day, on the high road to Tehran, I found it more interesting than some other branches, and dissimilar from that monotony so generally pervading Persian travel. The passes were rugged, the rivers deep; the latter offer some dangers where bridges are so scarce and so imperfect. Plunging into one of them rather hastily, my horse lost his footing, and was fast carried off by the stream, and being driven

on a sand-bank, had a hard struggle to gain the opposite side. There being always some difficulty with the baggage-horses, crossing the rivers becomes a scene of some interest, as these streams sometimes contain the most treacherous whirlpools, swallowing up man and beast; of which Sir John Malcolm gives a striking anecdote in his history.

We next got into a most difficult ravine, the ups and downs of which made the horses snort, and we lost our way in the wilderness. At length we emerged into a Koordish village, in which we could scarcely obtain the hospitality of *water*; for these people are but little removed above the flocks and herds they live amongst, and one feels degraded to see human beings reduced to any thing so low in the scale of creation: they merely vegetate on the soil which feeds them, their dens sometimes disturbed by the cattle, and they lie down together amidst the mutual dung and rubbish. I always prefer the cattle apartment where there is a distinction, and have often enjoyed the warm shelter of a stable, sleeping luxuriously on the hard ground, my horse snorting over me. There is a certain luxury in this easy and aboriginal mode, of which we get plenty in Persian travel.

We then paid a visit to the Khan's village of Sheik der Abaud; the Ketkodeh, with numerous villagers, some on horse, some on ass-back, according to their means, coming out to meet him; and the respectful homage with which he was conducted to his tent, with their "Kush amadeed," or welcome; the impatient haste of the Rayahs, as they thronged around the Khan's horse; their noisy vociferations through the village, "the Khan is come:" made it a most amusing scene. I took all this for attachment to the Khan's government, which had been renowned for clemency and liberality—so much so, that many new settlers came to sit under "the protecting shadow of his countenance."

Then began the "chum y chum," or compliments; quite a shower of them. The Khan seeing the flourishing state of the village, "Your face is whitened," said he to the Ketkodeh; to which he replied, "May your condescension never be less. If I have any salt, 'tis the salt of the Khan; all I have is his." He is then permitted to sit at the end of the nummed, and the pipe of condescension is offered to him from the Khan's mouth; this is the highest proof of favour.

I was exceedingly amused at witnessing these proceedings. As the natives stood around, whilst the Khan held his village parliament, their sundry griefs and wants were enumerated, sometimes with noisy clamour. One fellow was particularly vociferous with his sufferings. I fancy he had been ill-used, from the many attempts to put him down. The parliamentary usage of "spoke," not being sufficient, "Stop his mouth," said the Khan; with that the "farosh" hit him such a blow with a stick as silenced him at once, and cut short the thread of his discourse, and as I imagined, with some damage to his future eloquence, since he must have swallowed some of his teeth.

The Ketkodeh then made a report of his administration; the levies of corn, of rice, and other produce for the Khan's use; that so many new subjects had been born to him; so many arrived; and the thousand and one incidents of a Persian village were most eloquently detailed. He then recapitulated the wants of the villagers; amongst others a "humnum," or bath, was asked for, and immediately granted. "Barikallah," said the gapesters, "may your bounty never be less." Many other demands were summarily acceded to.

The bounteous Khan was now appealed to by the Moolah who wanted a new mosque to be built for the followers of Ali. As I sat on my nummed of novelty, and smoked my pipe of meditation, I began to think that here the Khan's liberality would be stayed (seeing that he was not a Mahomedan, but an "Isauvi," or Christian). To my great astonishment, this was also granted. "What!" said I to the Khan with indignant surprise; "you going to raise a temple to the worship of the impostor?" He laughed. "Not a bit of it," said he; "I neither intend it, nor do they expect it." So here was Persian legislation! no one deceived but myself! They had been bandying about compliments, promises, and thanks, for an hour or so, without any meaning beyond that of "Persian courtesies," which, to use a homely phrase, are as "plenty as blackberries."

The debates were no longer interesting to me; I immediately rose, and the Khan followed, surrounded by his numerous vassals, all lauding him with their "May the Khan's shadow increase, and his bounty grow," and finally the "Khoda hafiz shuma," "may God take you into his holy protection." The Parliament was broken up, and the

House prorogued *sine die*. The Persians are very polite, certainly, which it must be admitted is an agreeable concomitant of character; but as to trusting them!—But I have done; though I should not omit saying that the Khan's obedient subjects were so captivated with his robes, that the same night they plundered the tent of almost of every thing it possessed, whilst we were sleeping in it. Of course every enquiry was instituted, the bastinado threatened, but no delinquent could be found. The general custom is to begin with the Ketkodch, who is soon degraded from his high station to the "felek,"* and so on through the village, until the culprit is discovered. But the Khan was afraid to proceed to such extremities, either dreading an *emeute*, or that it would be somewhat inconsistent with his late parliamentary courtesies.

Luckily for me, my things escaped, or they would have *told* amongst the Sheik der Abaudies, there being a marked difference between their "shelwars" and my tights. Suffice it that

* This is a mode of punishment peculiar, I believe, to Persia. A long pole is held up by two men, having a noose in the middle of it, through which the feet of the culprit are passed, whilst two others strike upon them according to the sentence of so many sticks.

the robbers were never found out; they put it upon the Eleauts, or wandering tribes, who, they said, had been prowling about our tent, though no one saw them. I imagined that the Khan having promised so liberally, they doubted his sincerity, and therefore helped themselves to what they could find—a genuine specimen this of Persian character. They do not even believe themselves—how can they believe each other? They say “Falsehood mixed with good intentions, is preferable to truth tending to excite strife.”

“Let us be off,” said I to the Khan, almost dreading that they might dispute with us even our “personals.” He laughed at my ignorance of the Persian customs, boasted of his subjects, and proceeded to legislate on the affairs of the village.

Whilst he was thus occupied some eight or ten days, I strolled about on horseback into some of those pretty nooks and recesses with which the neighbourhood abounded. Amongst others, was the “Baugy Zardaloo,” or apricot garden, literally so, since it was planted with these trees exclusively, forming a beautiful umbrageous retreat. The origin of this place was rather interesting.

A house, now in ruins, had been built some twenty years before by order of the Prince, for the accommodation of Mr. Williamson, an Englishman, who had come to Persia to superintend the working of the extensive copper mines supposed to exist in this district of Sheik der Abaud.

Here I found the remains of furnaces, with other fragments of mining operations. These mines form quite a history in this country. It is singular, and perhaps almost peculiar to the Persian soil, that the finest promises end in empty nothings. I speak of *natural* deceptions, not *personal* ones. I had been already taken in by the "subah kauzib," or "the false dawn;" likewise by the "sahrah," or "mirage," which, to a thirsty traveller, I found to be the most tantalizing. But now I was to be taken in by finding native copper on the surface, whilst the bowels were empty veins of ore, leading to threads, and then lost, no one could tell where; there was just enough to keep up the deception for a time, and then, Persian like, they would only mock your expectations. Digging and digging, "now we have it," said M——; "here is a vein inexhaustible:" and after much toil it totally disappeared.

I had much experience in this village, and began to like my domicile amongst the villagers; even the dogs became civil. There is also a sort of charm about Persian servants, I mean the way in which they serve you, although you know you cannot trust them. I was plundered by them several times, but what of that? They are always ready with their prompt attention, waiting on your looks, almost anticipating your wants; and then their agreeable "belli sahib," to any thing you may ask, right or wrong. And how agreeable in the morning, on opening your eyes, to find them waiting with the "tchibook" ready lit, and the excellent cup of coffee. How many a cloud have I whiffed from my pillow, which I deem the "Persian Elysium." There is another advantage in Persian servants: if you are in a bad humour, in order to get out of it you may cuff them about like a parcel of foot-balls; they spring up again with their "belli sahib," not at all offended.

They have a curious custom in this country of endeavouring to find out a thief. They prepare the "hak-reczi," which is a heap of earth in a dark place, through which the servants are to pass

—in at one door, out at the other. It would be rather uncivil to suspect any one in particular; so to avoid personalities, you request the thief to drop the stolen articles in the earth, and nothing more will be said about it. I tried the experiment, but without success.

CHAPTER X.

HENRY MARTIN.

OF this distinguished missionary and champion of the cross, who fearlessly unfolded his banner and proclaimed Christ amongst the bigotted Mahomedans, I have heard much in these countries, having made acquaintance with some persons who knew him, and saw (if I may so say) the last of him.

At the General's table at Erzroume (Paskevitch), I had the honour to meet graffs and princes, consisting of Russians, Georgians, Circassians, Germans, Spaniards, and Persians, all glittering in their stars and orders, such a *mélange* as is

scarcely to be found again under one banner; looking more like a monarch's levy than any thing else. My neighbour was an Armenian bishop, who, with his long flowing hair and beard, and austere habits, the cross being suspended to his girdle, presented a great contrast to the military chiefs. There were many other priests at the table, of whom he was the principal. He addressed me in my native tongue very tolerably, asking if I had known any thing of the missionary, Martin. The name was magic to my ear, and immediately our colloquy became to me of great interest.

The bishop was the Serrafino of whom Martin speaks in his journal, p. 454, I happening, at the time, to have it with me. He was very superior to the general caste of the Armenian clergy, having been educated at Rome, and had attained many European languages. He made Martin's acquaintance at Etchmiazin, the Armenian monastery at Erivan, where he had gone to pay a visit to the Patriarch, or chief of that people, and remained three days to recruit his exhausted strength. He described him to me as being of a very delicate frame, thin, and not quite of the middle stature, a beardless youth, with a countenance beaming

with so much benignity as to bespeak an errand of Divine love. Of the affairs of the world he seemed to be so ignorant, that Serrafino was obliged to manage for him respecting his travelling arrangements, money matters, &c. Of the latter he had a good deal with him when he left the monastery, and seemed to be careless, and even profuse, in his expenditure. He was strongly recommended to postpone his journey, but from his extreme impatience to return to England, these remonstrances were unavailing. A Tartar was employed to conduct him to Tocat. Serrafino accompanied him for an hour or two on the way—with considerable apprehensions, as he told me, of his ever arriving in his native country.* He was greatly surprised, he said, not only to find in him all the ornaments of a refined education, but that he was so eminent a Christian; “since (said he) all the English I have hitherto met with, not only make no profession of religion, but live seemingly in contempt of it.”

I endeavoured to convince him that his impres-

* It is a custom in the East to accompany travellers out of the city to bid them God speed, with the “*khoda hafiz shuma*,” “may God take you into his holy keeping.” If an Armenian, he is accompanied by the priest, who prays over him and for him with much fervour.

sion of the English character was in this respect erroneous; that although a Martin on the Asiatic soil might be deemed a phoenix, yet many such existed in that country which gave him birth; and I instanced to him the Christian philanthropy of my countrymen, which induced them to search the earth's boundaries to extend their faith. I told him of our immense voluntary taxation to aid the missionaries in that object, and of the numerous Christian associations,—for which the world was scarcely large enough to expend themselves upon.

He listened with great attention, and then threw in the compliment, “you English are very difficult to become acquainted with, but when once we know you, we can depend on you.” He complained of some part of Martin's journal referring to himself, respecting his then idea of retiring to India, to write and print some works in the Armenian language, tending to enlighten that people with regard to religion. He said, that what followed of the errors and superstitions of the Armenian church, should not have been inserted in the book, nor did he think it would be found in Martin's journal. His complaint rested much on the compilers of the work in this respect; he said,

"these opinions were not exactly so expressed, and certainly they were not intended to come before the public, whereby they might ultimately be turned against me."

At Erzroume, on my way to Persia, I had met with an Italian doctor, then in the Pasha's employ, from whom I heard many interesting particulars respecting Martin. He was at Tocat at the time of our countryman's arrival and death, which occurred on the 16th October, 1812; but whether occasioned by the plague, or from excessive fatigue by the brutal treatment of the Tartar, he could not determine. His remains were decently interred in the Armenian burying ground, and for a time the circumstance was forgotten. Some years afterwards, a gentleman, at the request of the British ambassador in Constantinople, had a commemorative stone erected to his memory, and application was made to the Armenian bishop to seek the grave for that purpose. He seemed to have forgotten altogether such an occurrence, but referring to some memoranda which he had made of so remarkable a case as that of interring a Ferengée stranger, he was enabled to trace the humble tablet with which he had distinguished it. It is now

ornamented with a white slab, stating merely the name, age, and time of death of the deceased.*

I had many reminiscences of Martin, at Marand particularly. I quitted this place at midnight, just at the time and under the circumstances which he describes. "It was a most mild and delightful night, and the pure air, after the smell of the stable, was reviving." I was equally solitary with himself. I had attached great interest to my resting-place, believing it to have been the same on which Martin had reposed, from his own description, as it was the usual reception for travellers, the "menzil," or post-house. Here I found myself almost alone, as with Aliverdy, my guide, not three words of understanding existed between us. Martin says, "they stared at my European dress,

* On my return to Erzroume, two years afterwards, I learnt the tragical end of the Italian doctor, who was sacrificed to Mahomedan vengeance. As the Russians were approaching the town, he happened to be the only European remaining there; and being in the Pasha's service, he deemed it to be ample protection, he became alarmed, however, at the feverish state of the town, and sent on his wife and family to Tocat, intending to join them there. Not half an hour elapsed before he was stopped by the Turks and shot, they then took him to one of the mosques, and hacked the body into morsels, with merciless barbarity. No motive could be assigned beyond that of an ebullition of savage feeling at Russian invasion.

but no disrespect was shown." Exactly so with me : the villagers stood around questioning my attendant, who was showing me off, I know not how.

Martin's description of the stable was precisely what I found it ; thus—" I was shown into the stable, where there was a little place partitioned off, but so as to admit a view of the horses." He was " dispirited and melancholy." I was not a little touched with this in my solitariness, and sensibly felt with the poet:—

" Thou dost not know, how sad it is to stray
Amid a foreign land, thyself unknown,
And when o'erwearied with the toilsome day,
To rest at eve and feel thyself alone."

At Khoie, on my return, I witnessed the Persian ceremony related by Martin in his journal of the death of Imam Hussein—the anniversary of which is so religiously observed in that country. At Tabreez I heard much of him who was

" ——— Faithful found
Among the faithless—faithful only he,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept—his zeal—his love."

I scarcely remember so bright an ornament to the Christian profession, on heathen land, as this

hero of the cross, who was "patient in tribulation, rejoicing in hope;" and I heard him thus spoken of by those who could estimate the *man*, and perhaps not appreciate the *missionary*;—"If ever there was a saint on earth, it was Martin; and if there be now an angel in heaven, it is Martin." Amidst the contumely of the bigotted Musselmans, he had much to bear, as to the natural man, amongst whom he was called an "Isauvi," (the term given to Christians).

Martin's translation of the Scriptures did, at length, find royal protection in Persia, as by the following firman:—"In the name of God, whose glory is over all! It is our high will, that our dear friend, the worthy and respectable Sir Gore Ousley, Envoy Extraordinary from his Majesty the King of Great Britain, be informed that the book of the Gospel, translated into the Persian tongue by the labours of Henry Martin, of blessed memory, which has been presented to us in the name of the learned, worthy, and enlightened society of Christians, who have united for the purpose of spreading the divine books of the teacher Jesus (to whose name, as to that of all the prophets, be ascribed honour and blessing) has been received by us, and merits our

high acknowledgment. For many years the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were known in Persia; but now the whole of the New Testament is completely translated, which event is a new source of satisfaction to our enlightened mind. With the grace of God, the merciful, we will direct those of our servants who are admitted into our presence to read the said writings from beginning to end before us, that we may listen to their sentiments respecting the same. Inform the members of the above enlightened society, that they receive, as they merit, our thanks.

Given in Rebialavil, in the year of the
Hegira 1229.

FUTTEE ALI SHAH KAJAR."

Thus much for the royal courtesy; but I will venture to say, that "the enlightened mind" was never once illuminated by hearing read the translations alluded to; he and his courtiers would rather spit upon them, than admit our Scriptures within the "dur kaneh," or palace gate. I have had proof of this in a German missionary, who, with much toil and bribery, smuggled some translations amongst them. On his quitting Persia,

they contemptuously tore them up in his presence, and trampled them in the dirt.

I know of no people where, to all human calculation, so little prospect opens of planting the cross. The moolahs are by no means averse to religious discussion, and still remember the "enlightened infidel," as Martin was called; but so bigotted are these benighted Moslems, and show so much zeal, as I noticed at their Ramazan, that they scorn us, and, I may say, they shame us. It is interesting, when looking at those dark regions, to enquire—when shall the cross triumph over the crescent? when shall the riches and power of the Gospel spread over their soil, root up the weeds of error, and produce the fruits of righteousness?

Since the days of Martin, but little effort has been made by the Missionary Society to turn the tide of Christian philanthropy towards this country; but I would say, 'spite of the discouragements, send your missionaries to this stronghold of Mahomet; here plant your standard of redeeming love to the wretched devotee of the impostor; to the sometime worshipper of the sun, hang out the banner of the Son of Righteousness; kindle in his bosom the flame of Divine truth, that the

Holy Spirit, of which his former God was the emblem, may enlighten and guide him into the fold of Christ.*

* It is gratifying to find from a paper in the "Asiatic Register," the writer of which spent a few weeks at Shiraz, that the love and work of this distinguished missionary, although he saw no fruits from them, have in one instance proved that "his labour has not been in vain in the Lord." He relates that in that city he met with an interesting character, Mahomed Rahem, who had been educated for a moolah; a man of considerable learning, and much attached to the English. He found him reading a volume of Cowper's Poems, and was astonished at the precision with which he expressed himself in English; this led to the subject of religion, when he acknowledged himself to be a Christian, and related the following circumstance.

"In the year of the Hegira 1223, there came to this city an Englishman, who taught the religion of Christ with a boldness hitherto unparalleled in Persia, in the midst of much scorn and ill treatment from the moolahs as well as the rabble. He was a beardless youth, and evidently enfeebled by disease; he dwelt amongst us for more than a year. I was then a decided enemy to infidels, as the Christians are termed by the followers of Mahomet, and I visited this teacher of the despised sect, for the purpose of treating him with scorn, and exposing his doctrines to contempt. Although I persevered in this conduct for some time, I found that every interview not only increased my respect for the individual, but diminished my confidence in the faith in which I was educated. His extreme forbearance towards the violence of his opponents, the calm and yet convincing manner in which he exposed the fallacies and sophistries by which he was assailed (for he spoke Persian excellently), gradually inclined me to listen to his arguments, to enquire dispassionately into the subject of them, and finally to read a tract which he had written in reply

to "A Defence of Islamism," by our chief moolahs. The result of my examination was a conviction that the young disputant was right. Shame, or rather fear, withheld me from this opinion, I even avoided the society of the Christian teacher, though he remained in the city so long. Just before he quitted Shiraz I could not refrain from paying him a farewell visit. Our conversation, the memory of which will never fade from the tablet of my mind, sealed my conversion. He gave me a book; it has been my constant companion; the study of it has formed my most delightful occupation; its contents have often consoled me."

Upon this he put into my hand a copy of the New Testament in Persian, on one of the blank leaves was written, "there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth." HENRY MARTIN.

The only person I remember whose missionary zeal has led him from England towards Persia since Martin's death, was Mr. Groves. To labour in Persia was, I believe, his original design, although he went beyond it into Turkey. This eminently distinguished layman sacrificed country, fortune, and friends, to his ardent desire for unfurling the banner of the Cross, and preaching Christ crucified to the poor Mahomedans. But zeal, indiscreet zeal, may waste its odours even when it proceeds from the purest motive, and on this account one grieves to see an individual spending and being spent where no good results have been, nor are ever likely to be seen. Instead of grounding himself in the language, which he ought to have done in England—instead of associating himself with some particular church, be it either within or without the national establishment—he went into the wilds of Mahomedanism, where the natives esteemed him to be a wandering dervish, instead of a respectable moolah or sheik, which title would have commanded for him immediate respect.

With an ignorant people, rank in life goes a great way, and although we know that to be a Christian priest it is not necessary to be clothed in canonicals, yet to be an effective advocate of the cause of Christ amongst the Moslems, he should have been of some order of the priesthood. This interesting cha-

racter (from an obstinacy of indiscretion, if I may use the term) has sacrificed a life of wearying and unproductive labour at Bagdad. His Journal from thence, instead of reporting spiritual progress amongst the Mahomedans, presents a tissue of sufferings and misfortunes to himself and his *dear* people, quite harrowing to the feelings, and partaking more of romance than reality. Where he may be now spending himself I know not, though I believe him to be labouring on Mahomedan soil.

CHAPTER XL

KARADAGH.

THIS district of Persia has been but little visited by the Ferengees. I will, therefore, stroll over the surface more leisurely. Having made another visit to the Khan's village in our vagabondizing tour, where we had been complimented and pillaged, I began to get more acquainted with the Persian *finesse*, which, among themselves, means "neither to believe nor to be believed."

Duplicity is so deeply impressed upon the Persian character, that the greatest adept in it has the most honour. The game of conversation is kept up with an overwhelming politeness. Thus the master of the house tells his guest, that "he looks

as brilliant as the sun, and as placid as the moon ;” to which he replies, “ his ears are now regaled with the tones of the nightingale, and may the roses of happiness ever bloom in the garden of his destiny ;” with other compliments quite untranslatable ; and the thousand and one nothings come out of their mouths so glibly, and so unmeaningly, that they seem glad when it is over, and laugh at each other. On taking leave there is a great deal said about “ zhamet.” I was long ignorant of the meaning of this word, which implies by the visitor what a deal of trouble he has given ; the other doubles it with “ kali zhamet”—it is *he* that has given the trouble ;—and so they go on bowing out each other with their “ zhamets” innumerable.

It was in the month of June that we traversed this district. The way began through a fine country (for Persia), well watered, which occasioned a continuity of villages, seemingly all flourishing. At Overjon we rested the first evening, having pitched our tent in a beautiful orchard ; and the approach to the village was remarkable from the high mountains which we had to cross, some of the ravines being filled with snow. I have the most vivid recollection of this day’s ride ; setting

out in a broiling sun, and then encountering an atmosphere below zero. Near the river we passed a small Koordish encampment; then the abrupt ascent of a very narrow pass led to this magnificent mountain scenery, reminding me much of the wilds of Koordistan. I thought I had never seen any daylight so singular; there was a sunny landscape on the extensive plains, looking warm and cheering, with little bright spots of villages here and there, man and beast from thence scarcely discernible.

The mountains over which we were travelling, were clothed partly with verdure, partly with snow. The wonder was how we got up; but it was exceeded by how we were to descend; which was always on the slide. The magnificence of Persian scenery consists in its seemingly boundless extent; the outline being piled up in every variety of mountain, but not rock. Both mind and body seem to expand at such scenes: you breathe freely; "the world is all before you, where to choose" a boundless estate; you inhale the air of prodigal freedom, never to be felt in an enclosed country—'tis a sort of aerial feeling.

I had unknowingly preceded my party, and had

just exclaimed, "Oh let me gaze, of gazing there's no end!" when I was surprised by a host of villagers on horseback, Hadji Cossim Khan's family being coming from the district to which I was tending. The *cortège* consisted of many fair haremites and female slaves, preceded by the faroshs clearing the way, and looking with most jealous eye lest any one might glance at the ladies covered with shawls. The Persian vigilance, in this respect, is never relaxed, and a breach of good manners by any attempt to invade it might prove very dangerous to the traveller.

They seemed surprised to see a Ferengée stranger in these wild passes quite alone. The Khan, seeing our party in the distance, galloped off to greet them. His horses were richly caparisoned; his suite numerous; and I deemed this one of the most sumptuous Persian turns-out that I had yet seen (royalty excepted). These chiefs in Persia, when very remote from the seat of government, live in great state; they exercise absolute sovereignty over their dependents, and will sometimes defy the exactions of the Shah himself when they deem them exorbitant.

Seated on the green sward of a pretty orchard,

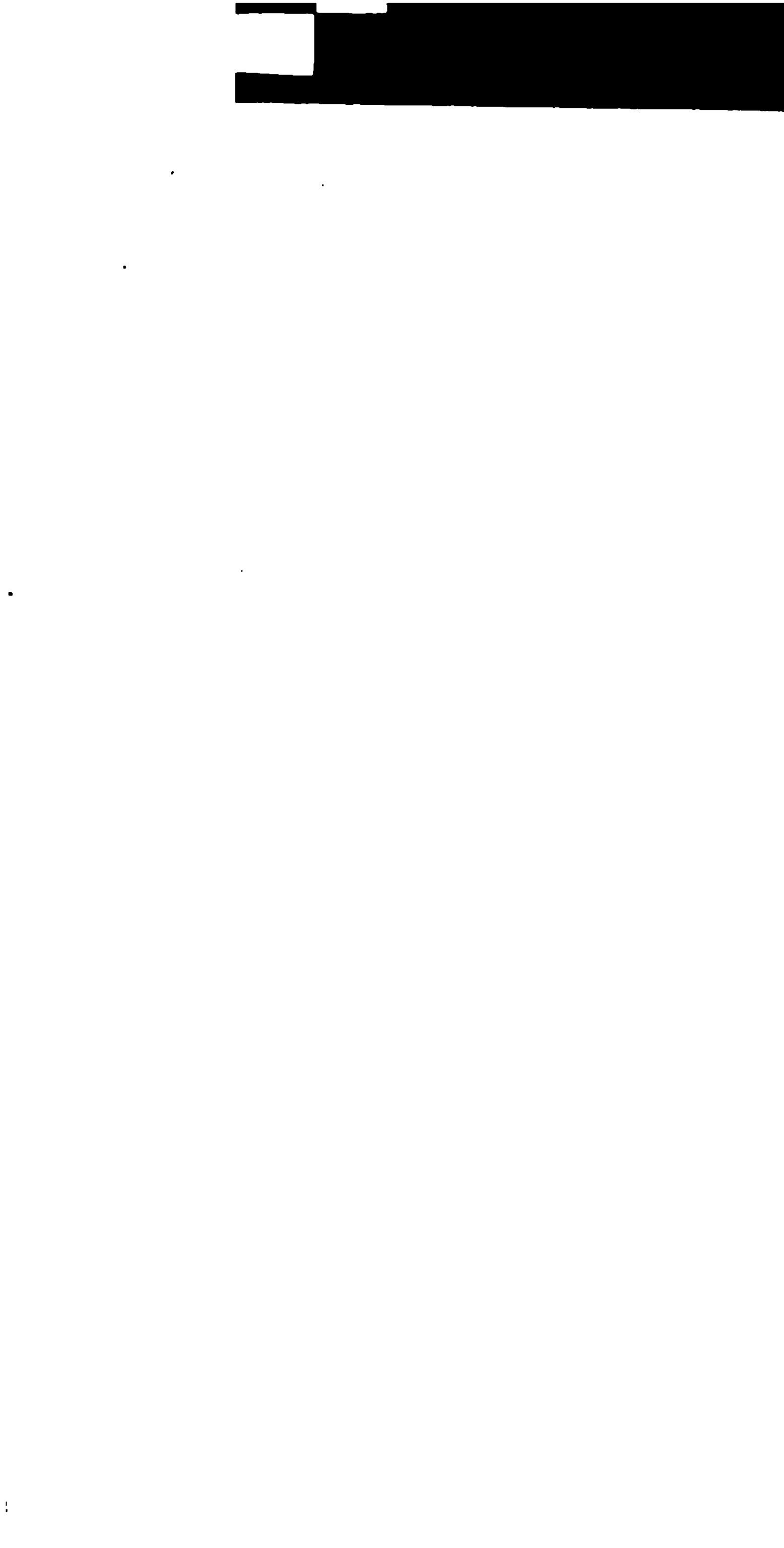
at Overjon, the interesting arrangements of carpeting, camping, haltering, &c. went on. We had made a toilsome march of it this day; the beasts were tired; and finding ourselves so agreeably encamped, we tarried the following day at this village, and promenading about, as was my wont, whip in hand, dog hunting (or rather dog fearing), I suddenly came on a party of women, washing their linen in the running stream. Up they started with one general "whallah;" and planting themselves against the wall face in hand, there they stood, a most picturesque group of moving rags, unslipped, but all veiled. I dreaded an *emeute*, of the dogs at least.

I have already noticed this strong national custom of female modesty—if it may be so called—in Persia, amongst the better classes; that it should extend to the *canaille* is remarkable. I never saw any national prejudice so strong. I had frequent subsequent confirmations of this when coming suddenly into a village, and surprising women under similar circumstances; their consternation was excessive; helter-skelter they ran, hiding their faces in their hands, whilst the nether garments had some of them escaped, it being windy weather.



ALL FEROIAN VILLAGERS AT OVERMUN

1898 1899 1900 1901 1902 1903 1904 1905 1906 1907 1908 1909 1910 1911 1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1917 1918 1919 1920 1921 1922 1923 1924 1925 1926 1927 1928 1929 1930 1931 1932 1933 1934 1935 1936 1937 1938 1939 1940 1941 1942 1943 1944 1945 1946 1947 1948 1949 1950 1951 1952 1953 1954 1955 1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035 2036 2037 2038 2039 2040 2041 2042 2043 2044 2045 2046 2047 2048 2049 2050 2051 2052 2053 2054 2055 2056 2057 2058 2059 2060 2061 2062 2063 2064 2065 2066 2067 2068 2069 2070 2071 2072 2073 2074 2075 2076 2077 2078 2079 2080 2081 2082 2083 2084 2085 2086 2087 2088 2089 2090 2091 2092 2093 2094 2095 2096 2097 2098 2099 2100



The next morning, at six o'clock, we crossed the Hadji river, reputed to be salt water. Sitting down on its banks, we converted some of it into tea; nor did it vitiate the souchong at all, that I remember. It was now no longer the arid land of Persia; water was gushing from the soil in various directions; and we had many a fording difficulty this day, particularly with the baggage-horses. This is always an affair of some little interest. The "charwarder" has to dash into the stream first, to sound the depths, &c. and if he succeeds the rest of the party follow. Sometimes he has to swim for it, and then other soundings must be made; then the "yaboo" becomes obstinate; he sticks in the mud, or will lay down with the load on his back. It is always an interesting affair, and some little anxiety is felt to get it well

Pursuing our way, on attaining the summit of the hill, looking down into the little village of Herries, I was enchanted with the peaked mountains, the extensive plains—all mute and motionless. "Here will I dwell," said I to the Khan, "and become Ketkodeh of Herries." Persian

like, permission was immediately granted; and I had only to take possession. But on the nearer approach it savoured of ruins, and on entering it I found nothing else. The Khan laughed, and bid me joy of my possession. A wild garden springing up here and there amidst the crumbling mud walls, bespoke rich vegetation; and the water was abundant. The blight of oppression had sunk this once flourishing place almost into the very soil from whence it sprung.

Amidst the remains we breakfasted, there being a few squalid inhabitants, who furnished us with "moss," or sour milk, a most excellent beverage, beside good pancake-bread, butter, fruits, &c. Even in these village remains lay Persian duplicity; I mean in the concealed abundance of every provision. Had the Mehmandar been coming with his "sadir," or royal order to feed all his followers, there would have been plenty of sticks, but no bread; but only show them the "siller," which is more potent with them than even the firman of the "King of Kings," there is nothing wanting. The poor natives, ground down by oppression, are obliged to be deceptive and treacherous; it is dic-

tated to them by the law of self-preservation, which is stronger than any dictum even of "his most despotic Majesty."

We went on in a much wilder country than any I had yet visited; the ravines and mountains we had encountered before were nothing compared to these cloud-capped eminences. The horses snorted as they went up, and trembled as they came down.

Even in these wilds there were occasional encampments of the savage-looking Koords, under their black tents, wherever a patch of pasture could be found. These people know nothing about rent or taxes; happily disencumbered from the trammels of refined life, they despise its impositions. But the "chadre," or veil, was not forgotten. One fair shepherdess, when tending her flock, was very assiduous with her rags, which seemed rather disposed to coquet with her charms, by means of chinks here and there discoverable. But by putting my hand to my eyes (as a sort of assurance that I could see nothing), her modesty was spared.

At such places we always kept together in a sort of battle array, arms primed, and looking as fierce as possible to all intruders; any loiterer being

liable to be cut off. The Khan's vigilant eye associated the party in close phalanx. Thus we moved on over hill, over dale, ascending and descending frightful precipices. Here we met, in a very narrow pass, troops of Koords, or a moving village; every animal put in requisition, from a donkey to a bullock, laden with tents and kettles, children and chickens, slung in baskets; such a *melange* as was never seen in Europe I will venture to say, with their flocks and herds, horses and camels. The whole village was in motion, the men looking grimly wild; the women, under their tattered garb, striving to keep up amidst rags and penury the Mahomedan "shame-facedness" so peculiar to this people. They are shepherds by hereditary occupation, and plunderers from cupidity.

The spring of the year is hailed with delight by this nomadic race, when I have seen them emigrating from pasture to pasture. They retain their primitive pastoral habits, which the vicissitudes of ages have never eradicated. These nomades of the wilderness seem devoid of all local attachments; their wants are few; they appear contented and happy.

The tribe amongst whom we were moving were

notorious horse-stealers; they would even come down to Tabreez, rob the stables, and take the cattle into these mountains, where it is almost impossible to follow them; in their fastnesses they are inaccessible.

At length we arrived at a height where all semblance of a road ceased, to the great embarrassment of our guide. Not a trace of animal or village could be made; the ground being partially covered with snow, and otherwise of that barren description where "thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockles instead of barley." What was to be done? But there is an inexhaustible resource in Persian travel—the inviting "tchibook,"—so squatting ourselves on the ground, we puffed many a cloud, and held council as to proceeding. Every point of the compass was alike; no clue whatever tended to the village which we were seeking; so, leaving it to the horses, we had not proceeded far when some shepherds were seen in the distance, and they pointed to some almost inaccessible ravines which must be passed before we could reach the village of Bahool.

All description must fail of the remainder of

this day's journey ; it was icy cold in the month of June ; the clouds played at our feet :—

“ ——— Clouds in heaven's loom,
Wrought through varieties of shape and hue,
In ample folds of drapery divine.”

And as we passed through these magnificent folds, I felt the most thrilling sensations of delight.

As we trod our rugged way, the snow was in some places so thickly embedded, that it was difficult and dangerous for the baggage horses to proceed. A brilliant sunshine below (for in those heights we were quite obscured from its influence) would occasionally light up a bridle-path, where the goat was browsing. We slid over rocky chasms at which the horses revolted ; and scanned our way on the brinks of precipices gaping awfully below, to which one false step might prove the last. As I trod my slippery way, I would occasionally pause on some nook,—

“ To gaze and gaze, and wonder at the scene.”

I thought our dangers and difficulties amply repaid by the imposing view of this mountain scenery. Sublimity sat on its summits—grandeur and beauty in its vales ; and the variety of shades

scattered upon the whole made it look more like a picture than a reality.

But why do I compare art to nature ! I,

“ Who have been accustomed to entwine
My thoughts with nature rather in the fields,
Than art in galleries ——.”

I was almost drunk with its magnificence, and staggered down our harassing way, quite unknowing to what it would lead. There was an imposing awe in the solitude. If ever I felt out of the world, it was here. No tenant would inhabit it; from the eagle to the goat it was all deserted.

We scrambled on, making towards a sun-lit valley, which we imagined might be occupied by the flock and its shepherd; and it was so. They were feeding in rich pastures, to which we descended, where we got into almost tropical heat. I have before noticed the extraordinary and rapid changes of climate in Persia. In a few hours we had experienced this to as much as thirty degrees.

Here we learnt how much we had deviated from the proper road; and having taken temporary rest, and obtained information of a Koordish encampment, we sped our way to it, where we

were refreshed with "moss," or sour milk, dealt out to us very liberally, spite of the jealousy of the dogs, who seemed very angry at our intrusion. These nomades are always hospitable; ask for their salt, and they are sure to grant it you, which includes protection to a certain extent, beyond which they plunder you if they can.

We were not long in descending to our village of Bahool, where we found our tents pitched in a pretty orchard, the servants having preceded us the day before. This wretched village was situated near what the natives call a "jangall," or forest, although it offered a mere brushwood of stunted oak. Immediately around it were certainly a few trees of the birch kind, but late in their vegetation; but even these were to me a great novelty, having travelled so far without seeing a tree of any sort, garden wood excepted. Here we enjoyed our rest—

"All on the margin of a foaming stream,
And spread our careless limbs ———"

and smoked our tchibook of repose.
Having rested at this village some sixteen days

I had much enjoyment of the nomadic life ; and as I plunged farther into the forest, its magnificence expanded, and opened new pages of nature's beauties. I explored the gardens, got acquainted with the natives, propitiated the dogs, and really felt so happy in this wilderness, that I was loath to leave it.

I deem the Persian peasantry a very happy people (when under a liberal governor), because they are a contented people. The more they are isolated from any large town or government, the more is there of simplicity of mind, consequently less corruption of manners. Amongst them, any thing like *want*, much less of *starvation*, can never be known. I have already spoken of the abundance of a Persian village breakfast. They have "moss," or sour milk, which they are very fond of; an abundance of flat bread, which is soft and unleavened; with butter, cheese, honey, fruits in the season, eggs and fowls, rice and tobacco. They are never degraded by that stimulating demon, alcohol; nor is their soil polluted by the demoralizing gin-shops,—those sinks of iniquity, those reservoirs of shame and death,

which so degrade my native country, heating the mechanic almost into rebellion; rendering him, instead of a portion of the healthy strength, the noxious excrescence of his country. • From this the Persian peasant is exempt.

But they are not without their grievances. The occasional oppression of their local governors I have already alluded to; and another calamity, with which they are sometimes visited, withers their substance, desolates their land, and often drives them from their locality. I allude to the locusts, showers of which will occasionally visit the land. Whilst at dinner one day on the top of the house at Tehran, a small quantity of them dropped on our plates, attracted no doubt by the lights. I once met with them on the road to Kirishkeen; the natives were horrified at their approach, and took every means to frighten them

• The "temperance," and even "total abstinence" system is stealthily as it were making its way in this country, conferring a blessing on the community second only to "the Gospel of Peace." It is astonishing the progress it has made in Ireland under the influence of Father Matthew. Let us compete with the Mahomedans in this respect, and banish the demon alcohol from our soil.

off by "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." They resemble the grasshopper in size and shape; they are heavy on the wing, and soon fall to the ground, where they lay in seeming helplessness. I am not aware whether they are of that species which at the command of Moses so desolated Egypt; but they move occasionally in immense bodies, seemingly led by the king or queen of the tribe. They travel long journeys, and are generally brought in with a south-east wind. Their eggs being deposited in the autumn, are warmed into life by the sun.

The locusts which I saw were about three inches long, of a bright yellow colour. It is said that some of the people gather them for food; that they are good eating when boiled, and that they are even preserved by salting. I was by no means curious to taste of this spawn of nature, particularly with such an abundance of other food.

I had many a solitary meandering in these wilds. The river jumped down in foamy haste, in this Alpine scenery; there was only the sea wanting to complete Byron's description,

which I have so often entered into, and so truly felt:—

“ There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar :
I love not man the less, but nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, nor yet can all conceal.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE "IMARET KHORSHEED."

It was deemed a wonderful favour to be allowed to see this "Palace of the Sun," of which, with its numerous groves and fountains, flowers and shrubs, I had heard quite an oriental description, which had "tickled the imagination and opened the door of curiosity."

The buildings stood in different detached courts, and were all of mud, having the usual flat roof. The first hall, into which I was introduced by one of the court Khans, was the throne-room, from which his Majesty occasionally "sheds the light of his countenance on the dust of the earth." It was large and lofty, having recesses at each end,

on the walls of which were some displays of the Persian arts, in the way of painting. One of them was a battle-piece, the subject of which I could not learn. His Majesty was the most conspicuous figure in it, carrying all before him. In the galleries I noticed some figures of Ferengée males and females; I was told that they represented the earliest British envoys to Persia.

The walls were lined with marble and arabesque ornaments curiously inlaid; the ceiling partook of the same taste, all glittering with Asiatic finery. The front was open, and supported by two columns of black marble, about thirty feet high, in solid pieces, with a wreath around them, curiously cut. These were deemed great curiosities. On looking around on this oriental magnificence, which the Persians esteem to be "the wonder of the world," the servants (and they were numerous) were anxiously waiting to hear my exclamations of astonishment and delight.

Having trod my barefoot way, and expended all my Persian terms of admiration, I next examined the "takht," or throne, which was a moveable square platform, huge and unshapely. It stood about three feet from the ground, ascended by as

many steps. It was all of marble, of very fine grain; the carving was curious, but many of the figures unmeaning. It was abundantly ornamented with inscriptions, and beautifully inlaid with the Arabic character. In the centre was a small tube, or *jet d'eau*, which was supplied from a fountain in a recess of the room, and was deemed a very curious display of hydraulics by the Persians. The farther end of it was raised a little above the ordinary level. This was the imperial seat. The whole is carpetted and adorned with small ivory images when his Majesty is seated.

I was strongly tempted to take temporary possession of the Shah's throne, once the seat of Agha Mahmoud Kojá, the terror of Persia. As a mark of special favour, I was allowed to occupy, for a short time, the "takht" of the "Shah Padi Shah," the "Centre of the Universe," &c. It caused me no trepidation to mount the steps of empire, since I had been familiar with other thrones, and I fearlessly squatted myself on the same spot which the royal loins had shortly before occupied. No cannons "bruted it to the heavens;" no slave hung upon my nod; but I found it a hard, comfortless seat, very incompatible with any thing like

ease. Had I "let loose the flood-gates of imagination, and stood on the tip-toe of power," I could have decreed "Off with his head!" and thus have played the monarch to the full tune of oriental despotism. One thing I was assured of, that I was the first "ferengee" who had ever occupied the throne of Persia.

The second room was called "outough almas," from the crystal ornaments being formed diamond fashion, with which it is entirely covered. To this you ascend by a flight of awkward steps from another court. It has likewise a large open front, supported by pillars of wood, curiously painted; and similar recesses and galleries to the throne-room. The walls have some immense mirrors, and two large chandeliers are suspended, the whole being English. The glass is empannelled in very curious shapes, with enamelled borders, and painted ornaments of birds, roses, &c., in every variety of that oriental imagery in which the Persian imagination delights to revel; presenting altogether a blaze of mirror not unworthy the fervid description of the "Thousand and One Nights." The carpet was good; the "nummeds" thick, but moth-eaten; and as ma-

jesty himself sports nothing beyond this in the way of furniture, it leaves me but little to remark upon.

The Khan led me to the Gulistan, or "the Garden of Roses," of which we hear so much in Persia, with its bubbling fountains, and flowering shrubs. Here was to be seen every thing that could enchant—"the sweet-scented rose that had never looked upon dust; the spring that had never been vexed by a cold blast." This is the Paradise where "the nightingales warbled their enchanting notes, and rent the thin veils of the rose-bud and the rose." But I must have done with oriental imagery, or I shall never get through this enchanting spot, whose numerous tanks and streams of water gave it a most refreshing coolness. The plantations of roses were in full bloom, yielding to the air a delicious fragrance. I could almost realise the poet's feelings, "that it intoxicated the senses and made the heart drunk." Here I must do justice to the taste and ingenuity of the Persians, of which the Gulistan was certainly a magnificent display.

From the "bauleh kaneh," or window, which is very large, having openings both ways, did his

Majesty generally give audience to the envoys and courtiers below, who were kept some eight or ten feet from the window. The "baulch kaneh" itself had nothing particularly attractive in it, the ornaments being very similar to those of the last room ; but the carpets were better.

I now passed on to the "outough hyenah," or "room of mirrors," which is entirely covered with glass, including the ceiling. This was principally, I understood, from Russia, having that lustreless hue for which Russian glass is so distinguished. The chandeliers were English, and some of "Blade's best."

Then we proceeded to room the fourth, or "outough bulbul," the ornaments of which were of marble ; but from its being filled with the presents sent from Russia by the late emperor, I had but little scope for observation. The China vases, the bronze ornaments, the dingy cut-glass, the table and tea services ; these formed a part of the sundries, piled up in unceremonious heaps in this room. But amongst them was a great curiosity, of Russian fabric, an elephant of solid gold, about twelve inches long, having a dial-plate in front ; this, with its tail and tusks, being moved by the

same machinery. I had heard of it at Petersburg as an extraordinary effort of Russian art; but it was not thought much of, seemingly, by the Persian monarch, since all these things were jumbled together as mere lumber.

In the same court stands a small octagon room, called the "kuleh ferengee." It is composed principally of marble, and has two tanks of water in it, looking more like baths than any thing else. The windows were curiously carved, and some tablets of excellent Persian writing were exhibited on the walls.

I next passed on to an old building, where stands a curious structure, composed of sandal wood, sent to his Majesty from India, who used sometimes to occupy it when drawn into the court, as it was built upon wheels.

Playing the Paul Pry in all directions, I arrived at a large court, surrounded by buildings not yet finished, called the "Aumeneh 'Tauj," a fancy of the 'Tauj u Doulut, for a winter residence. It was in a very unfinished state, and was divided into a great number of small rooms, in rich variety of glass, marble, and tessellated pavements. A large marble "takht," or sleeping-place, stands in

the centre of the court; and here, under heaven's canopy, the monarch of Iran sometimes reposed himself. This out-door-sleep custom in the East is agreeably refreshing, and perfectly safe in a climate which has no night humidity.

A large building in another court attracted my attention; and here, as I was bending my way, "Sabre koon," "Stop," said the Khan, "it is the royal harem." And here (pausing at the threshold) lie the bones of several of the inveterate enemies of Agha Mahomed Shah, whose savage resentment was no otherwise to be gratified than by trampling over their bones daily. This savoured somewhat of that oriental barbarism with which Persian history so much abounds. *

I then proceeded to the royal stud, which is adjoining. About three hundred horses were tied to stakes in the court yard, for the benefit of air, and, it may be said, of exercise, since they had some length of rope. The oriental custom is, to fasten the heels together with large cotton ties, to

* It is stated as a fact, that this tyrant, on coming into Khorassan as conqueror, ordered the bones of Nadir Shah and his son to be disinterred, and carried to Tehran, and that they were buried at this doorway. What a singular thirst for revenge is this, scarcely to be comprehended by the European mind.

prevent their kicking; and in this way they are always picketted on a journey. The Turkoman horses principally prevailed,—a bony, powerful animal, with more strength than grace of action; more of the roadster than the courser. There were only a few Arabs. I have seen much finer animals in England; and I apply this remark to Persian horses generally. If that barbarous custom were abolished of cutting the tail, which so disfigures an English horse, he would find no competitor in Persia. "What is the extent of his Majesty's stud?" I enquired. "He has four thousand mares in one district, and horses sufficient to mount an army."

This then is the famous "Imaret Khorsheed," or "Palace of the Sun," whose principal features are monotony, simplicity, and unostentation; and here sits on the ground, and sleeps on the ground, the "Asylum of the Universe," a monarch of fancied grandeur far superior to the occupant of Windsor Castle, the Hermitage, or the Tuileries. If I were to make comparisons, I would say that the Autocrat of all the Russias would scarcely here lodge his gentleman usher.

I asked to see the glass bed and the shawl carpet,

but these were in the "andaroon." The former was included in the presents of the late Emperor of Russia! The idea of "his most despotic majesty" reposing on crystal!—Beds of roses (literally so) are not uncommon in Persia, but to me they would prove beds of thorns; for I have found the odour so powerful, as to conduce to any thing but repose.

Taking leave of the Khan with all the "zhamets" that I was master of, (that is, apologising for the great trouble which I had given him), I had to wend my way through the bazaars, to the great "maidan," or square, into which some of the palace windows open. In one corner of it was a tower of observation, from which his Majesty is supposed to witness the different executions. In this square was a tolerable show of artillery, the "topanches," or gunners, being about, and the "tuffenkehecs," or infantry, guarding the different gates and avenues. The whole of these buildings are within the "ark," or citadel, which is very extensive, surrounded by mud walls and a dry ditch, having sundry drawbridges, &c. I am quite unable to speak of its extent, though I lodged within it at my first visit to Tehran, but was always lost in

its intricacies. The various avenues in it, and approaches to it, are tortuous; one may spend days there, and never find one's way about. Every thing reminds you of contrivances against surprise, as though treachery were stalking about, and all means taken to prevent it. The entrances have all three or four door ways, always puzzling one which to take.

The bazaars were of the most tumble-down description, and very inferior to those at Tabreez; and what makes them so crowded and disagreeable is, that they become the thoroughfare from one part of the city to another. Any description of their motley occupants I will not attempt. To go through them on horseback, it is necessary to have the "faroshes" to clear the way—to put aside a string of mules, donkeys laden with brushwood, the chaunting dervish, or the importunate fakeer; the way being so narrow that it becomes densely choked, and the loud "kebardar" "take care," being shouted in all directions. It is quite an indescribable scene.

The "humnums," or baths, are numerous and good; these are the constant resort of the Persians. The Asiatics are very clean in this respect; and

not to go to the bath once a week, would be deemed almost a dereliction of duty. Here the toe and finger nails of the fair "shireen" are stained with the "hennah," or red dye, of which they are very proud. The Khan has his beard stained with "rang," or the black dye, which is beautiful in lustre, and will last some weeks. The luxury of the bath is very great in these warm climates, and the shampooing operation grateful when over, though I was very restive under it, and made the vault resound at my ticklings.

There are no remarkable buildings in this city of Tehran to claim attention. Some of the domes of the mosques are imposing from their size and bulb shape; but neither in the bazaars nor in the mosques, is there any thing to be compared with such buildings at Constantinople. These mud regions present a mass of low, flat-roofed dwellings, of one uniform hue and height. All the luxuries are within the spacious courts, the running streams, the blooming flowers, and bubbling fountains, of which the Persians are very ingenious in the display. The best house which I saw at Tehran was the British residence, standing in a large garden, prettily laid out, and abounding with fruits and

flowers; there were also extensive gardens behind, in which I took my daily walk. Our envoy had much improved his house by a good front of pillars and pediments, giving it quite a West-end appearance. He quite surprised the Tehranis, who, comparing it with their own mud hovels, would exclaim—"Barikallah"—"Mashallah!"—"Excellent—well done!"

That deeply-rooted and inveterate custom in my native country, of four-post bedsteads, down pillows and well-stuffed mattresses, is unknown in Persia. I query if there be in Tehran more than one machine of this sort—that belonging to the British Elchee. On the same spot of ground, the Persian squats, prays, and sleeps; the nummed of the day is removed for the nummed of the night, which is very simple, being somewhat thicker: this, with a pillow and coverlet, form their place of repose.

On my arrival in this city, "Where am I to sleep?" was my first demand, having been awoke out of my nap as I lay outside the gate, at the threshold, being fatigued with my night's travel, and arriving before the said gates were opened. But the lodging-places I found to be of the most

miscellaneous description. "Throw yourself on the ground wherever you please," was the order of the day, and in conformity with the general custom, I found the roof of the house to be the most agreeable berth; the roofs, as I have observed, being flat, and generally on the same level. It is here that the evening society of Tehran congregate, and it is amusing to witness what may be seen at a great distance—the various groups, sometimes of whole families, making their night arrangements—spreading carpets, planting bolsters, and laying themselves in all directions to cultivate sleep.

Nor should I forget their "numaz," or evening prayers: the prostrations, genuflexions, and salutations of so many people, whilst the "muzzins" are inviting them from the tops of the mosques, add much to the grotesqueness of the scene.

When it was over, I perambulated my boundaries, and took a peep at my neighbours, who were merely divided off by a low balustrade—in this way only intrusions being guarded against. I, quite unintending to do so, was going rather beyond my boundaries, when up sprang a batch of females,—*"Feringee ame dast"*—"the Feringee is coming;" they waited for no apologies on my

part, but off they ran, and off ran I too, determined for the future to "open wide the portals of prudence, and to close the avenues of indiscretion."

Although I like this independent mode of sleeping wherever momentary convenience may dictate, still it has sometimes its inconveniences, which I have experienced. I was one night awoke by the pattering of some drops on my coverlet, which was any thing but water-proof; a smart shower (a most unusual thing in Persia) was disturbing all the inhabitants of Tehran. Up they sprang with bolsters and carpets in hasty confusion, and I heard a Babel of sounds relative to their new arrangements, but was too much occupied with my own to attend to my neighbours. I made hasty retreat within the threshold, where I made out the night, the servant laying at my feet.

CHAPTER XIII

NIGHT TRAVEL IN PERSIA.

THERE is something very romantic in stealing through a wild country as it were by night. Having made five stations from Tehran, as far as Kirishkeen, it was deemed more prudent to obscure than to expose ourselves in this immediate neighbourhood. The road had been previously marked with rocky passes and tortuous ravines, which nature seems to have planted in Persia, as strongholds either of offence or defence between savage man. A road of this kind is therefore always deemed dangerous; and the prudent traveller, with his well-armed attendants, makes his cautious survey, that the pistols and

guns are in perfect readiness, in case of any sudden hostility.

It is amusing sometimes to witness the mutual caution of two parties coming towards each other, both on the defensive; the glittering of the fire-arms in the distance bespeaks a foe, although a friend; and warily approaching each other, instead of powder and shot they exchange the courteous "Salome," and "Alikom Salome."

Every one must go armed in this country. I was much amused in this wild district by our gholaum crying out that there were horsemen in the distance; immediately the priming and loading went on, and each person looked to his weapon of defence. On galloping towards our expected foes, they turned out to be a party of poor peasants on ass-back, who having been plundered the night before, at their village, were seeking either their cattle or the delinquents.

Some of these districts are occupied by the Eleauts, the nomades, or wandering tribes, living in their black tents, which are pitched according to pasture abundance. From these we kept aloof, fearing plague, dogs, and robbers. At one of their villages I had considerable difficulty

in gaining admittance. They had had sufficient taste of Russian invasion to loathe every one from that country, (indeed, I found this to be generally the case in Persia). They called me "Ruski," "Moscovite," "Pedersukteh," "Burn your fathers," and I know not what. The dogs were set at me, and I was not allowed to cross their threshold for some time. But an all-powerful argument in the shape of money prevailed—and what will not this do in Persia?

I found at the next station, Koramdereh, every thing to compensate for the incivilities of the last,—all Persian smiles and courtesies,—with their "Kush gelden,"—welcome—and "Bismillah," in proof of which they lay a lamb at your feet, and with a knife at its throat, its blood will be upon you, unless you avert the sacrifice.

But I must dwell a moment at this place, it being a large village, called the "happy valley." Richly wooded and watered, and embowered in its own groves, it had a very pretty effect from the neighbouring hills. It was on a Sunday morning, about ten o'clock, that I found my way into this village, heartily tired after a nine hours' march over a dry and thirsty soil, where there was little

or no water, and no other herbage than that "with which a mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom." Here I luxuriated in the little "bauleh kaneh," with an abundance which was a mockery to all appetite, of the finest fruits, &c. to my heart's content; my only fear was repletion.

The occasion of our night's travel was this: in the immediate neighbourhood, not long before, the Elchee's servants, who were conveying the envoy's baggage to Tehran, had been surprised in their camp by a party of marauders, who had carried off even their tents. Sir John Campbell immediately sent up a gholaum to Zenjan, to the Khan of that city, in whose district it occurred, to require instant redress for the insult offered to the British mission, and payment for the baggage stolen, stating the amount. These amounts are generally exaggerated by the servants, who are sometimes interested in the robbery, by giving information to the robbers. The Khan, in great alarm of being displaced from his government, pays the money; and then levys upon his subjects perhaps twice as much as he had to pay; and they levy upon whom

they can. Thus they make war upon each other, all in the way of trade.

To avoid being taxed to pay Sir John's losses, (alias robbed), it was deemed expedient to adopt the night travel from Koranderch. Stealing away from this station at midnight, we had a difficult road to pursue, as through the narrow ravines and swampy way we crept on, afraid even of the bark of the village dogs. These swampy ways were occasioned by irrigating the rice and melon grounds, which made a night march rather difficult.

I had many a starlight lucubration; the magnificent galaxy in the "vast concave" of a Persian sky, I thought I had never seen exceeded. I seemed to see palaces and arches in the starry firmament, and so gorgeous in light as I approached, that frequently I could not persuade myself that they were visions. This was certainly to me one of the "thousand and one nights."

I recollect a similar delusion once in a midnight march in Russia. Castles and battlements sparkled before me—I was constantly arriving—never arrived. I would always fix on the brightest star to guide me, as it were, through the night. Keeping

it in my eye, it seemed to promise protection; nor did I ever lose it until the broad glare of day wiped it out of the firmament. Anxiously looking for the opening of the "eyelids of the morning," the disappointments were frequent, occasioned by the "subah kauzib," or "the false dawn," so peculiar to this country.

Thus wending along, like culprits on forbidden soil, the "hush of night" was sometimes interrupted by the wary dogs, or the wakeful chanticleer, so easily disturbed, as we came suddenly on the black tents of the Eleauts, by whom we were sometimes challenged on the way; then by the careless muleteer, who on his donkey was leading his string of mules, and chaunting away the metre of Saadi, or Ferdoosi, seemingly with great zest.

The Persian poets are so much esteemed by the natives, that even the lower orders are strongly imbued with them.

Nothing is more interesting at such time than to watch for the first gleam of day, and I would sometimes exclaim—

—————"Look, the gentle day
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about,
Dapples the rosy east with spots of grey."

But it was the flickering "false dawn" again, which

I could not but imagine as illustrative of the country through which I was travelling. These remarks apply generally to those midnight movements when at funereal pace we have to creep over a soil, every step of which may be treacherous; but of treachery found I none.

Arriving the next morning at Sultaniah, we breakfasted in the tomb of Sultan Mahomed Khodabende, — horses and all. The dome of this tomb was nearly equal to that of St. Paul's. There it stood in solitary grandeur, amidst a crumbling village, the walls of which were fast blending with the soil whence they sprung. When looking at the seemingly poor decrepid natives, it always excited my astonishment how such splendid buildings, occasionally to be seen in Persia, could have been created there. I could have imagined it quite as easy to produce them by a rub of Aladdin's lamp.

In this extensive plain of Sultaniah his Majesty had a country palace for his accommodation, during the encampment of his troops, which generally took place every summer. The pasture is so abundant that an army of horses may fatten on it.

"I am your sacrifice," said the Ketkodeh, as we entered the village; however, the sacrifice of the

lamb was sufficient, and we were soon regaled with some "kiabobs" from its panting sides.

Pursuing our midnight travel from Sultaniah, the next station was Kush Kand, a very pretty village, so embowered in wood, and so richly watered, that it looked like a little oasis in the desert. There is something to me captivating in a Persian village, which I have never seen in any other; amidst the most barren sandy surface which this country generally presents, there springs up, smiling in its abundance, a small green spot on an arid map, offering its produce of honey and milk (but no wine); then, after a long and dreary ride, every limb aching on the saddle, suddenly to recline on the nummed of rest, and smoke the pipe of contentment, one chews the cud of pleasure beyond what I can describe.

The Turkish villages are generally so burrowed under the ground, that but for the stacks of corn and heaps of dried dung for fuel, which indicate habitancy, you may pass them unnoticed. The roofs being flat, and all covered with mud, the only sign of occupancy is a small raised aperture, for admission of light and the egress of smoke. On one occasion, when I had just arrived at

Diadin, and had sent Gul Mahmoud on the opposite side to seek some stable for repose, on his beckoning me across, I mounted as I thought a mound of earth, to make quick work of it, not two feet high. The horse began to plunge, his feet were amongst the rafters, and out ran the women and the dogs—"the sahib is coming through the roof." I produced such an *emeute* that the village was quite in an uproar, and I had great difficulty to disengage myself and my beast sound wind and limb. However, promising to pay all repairs, I was installed at length in a comfortable stable, from whence the chickens had been just ejected.

The Persian villages, on the contrary, have all the umbrageous character of fertility. The natives have generally a hungry, squalid appearance, which is rather kept up than disguised, simulation being a leading feature in the Persian character, the result, I imagine, of a despotic government, the genius of which is to depress all energy, to discourage industry, and to stultify the mental faculties.

Here I saw them treading out corn with the oxen. Almost every thing in Persia reminds me

of biblical customs. How very patriarchal is this! So also is their mode of taxation; they pay no rent for the soil, beyond that of a tenth of its produce. I marked the royal heap once or twice, which I thought fell very short of the competing heaps. However, this I left to his Majesty to find out. The most amicable division seemed to be made amongst the villagers themselves, where there are no enclosures nor boundaries to mark private property. It is brought into one common stock, which is enough for all. There can be no want in a country where the soil produces so abundantly by irrigation only. It comes the nearest to "a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny," to any that I have ever met with.

The natives, in the midst of so much abundance, seem to be negatively happy—a sort of stultification of faculties. I hear of no crime nor commotion amongst them, and they seem blessed with that negative enjoyment, the result of minds buried in the repose of ignorance. As I lay on the heap of corn at lazy length, smoking my pipe of meditation amongst the natives, Shakspeare's enquiry occurred to me:

" ————— What is man,
If his chief good, and market of his time
Is but to sleep and feed ! a beast ! no more.
Sure He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To rust in us unused."

But rust it does in the Persian villages, where prosperity depends much on the Khan of the district ; as, if he be rapacious, they suffer much persecution—if liberal and just, they become flourishing and contented. To avoid the former, they will emigrate to another locality ;—"the world is all before them where to choose ;"—the mud walls are soon raised, and in a very short time they establish another village, whilst the crumbling remains of those which they have left bespeak tyranny and oppression.

The natives, although serfs to the Shah, are not transferable with the villages, as they are in Russia ; they are in *nominal* slavery, without being *slaves*—I mean as property. It is true the Shah may swallow them alive, if he likes ; but he never *does so*. The emigration of the natives is a cause of strife sometimes amongst the neighbouring Khans, since population produces wealth. Where the people are so few, as compared to the

extent of territory, they are tenacious of their subjects being inveigled away, although they have no power to prevent it. I attended once a court of pleas on this subject, than which nothing could be more amusing. The ragged groups—the vociferous defendants, when charged with stealing away—and their rejoinders of oppression and cruelty—it was a scene for an Hogarth. “What dirt have you been eating? make your face white if you can, you Haremzadeh,” said the Khan. “I have eat dirt,” says the fellow; then crouching before his chief, afraid of the bastinado, “My liver has become water, and my soul has withered up.”

There is, too, that passiveness about them which is equally amusing, and the order to “give him the shoe,” is as quietly received as it is promptly obeyed by the faroshes, who, taking off their iron-heel slipper, give him such a blow on the mouth as not only to cut short the argument, but sometimes to smash in the teeth of the arguer. This order of the court is pretty effective, and frequently ends the assize; but “turn up his heels” is deemed a still sounder argument.

Some of the villages are walled, and flanked with towers; and in the “chummun,” or meadow

districts, where the pasture is rich and abundant, they drive out and bring back their numberless flocks and herds morning and evening, always housing them in the stables at night. They appear to have quite a personal attachment for the brute beasts—a sort of family compact. I recollect particularly at the village of Dubalabad, a very large and flourishing district, where we arrived rather late in the evening, just as the natives were housing their cattle—the lowing of the oxen—the bleating of the sheep—the noise of the dogs, as this army of animals made their march into it. It was a most pleasing rural scene—there was something patriarchal in it. I could fancy Laban and Rebecca, Isaac and Leah amongst the villagers. This is an invariable custom in Persia,—that of housing the cattle every evening. They durst not leave them exposed at night in an unenclosed country; they would be not only subject to stray, but to be abstracted by their neighbours. There can be no security where there are no laws, and no confidence but in caution.

Most of the villages have “menzils,” or post-houses, for the traveller; and if he be of any importance, the Ketkodeh comes to pay him

a visit, followed by a motley train of villagers, in their rough garb of sheep-skin coats, and badly slippered (their rags are deemed a protection against spoliation and oppression), who advance by degrees to the Khan's mat, and welcome him with the "Kush guelden," but never presuming to sit without his invitation. Then, when the pipe is produced, and sometimes the coffee (but this latter is a most special favour), he seems to bask in the Khan's countenance, and entreats permission "to rub his forehead at his threshold."

The Persians are very abject ; they take hold of the hem of your garment, and entreat permission to kiss the dust off your feet. Their civilities are overwhelming, their language fascinating ; for who is there that does not like to be told, "My eyes are enlightened by seeing you?" But their creed is that of Saadi : "Truth is an excellent thing when it suits our purpose, but very inconvenient when otherwise." Slavery is their atmosphere ; they despise all other government. I can easily understand this, since every class exercises the same despotism to their dependents. Had the Shah been in the village, the Khan would have been prostrating himself, and playing the same part as

the Ketkodeh was now performing towards *him* ; and when he quits the Khan's presence, he acts the despot to those below him ; and so the comedy goes on from one class to another, each content to become the slave, that he may in his turn play the monarch.

From Kush Kand to Nickpy is a short stage, where I arrived early in the morning ; and the only accommodation I could find was a three-walled shelter, without any roof, which had been taken down for fire-wood by the troops passing that way. These are complete destructives, having full licence to help themselves wherever they come ; which they do without mercy, having no regular pay. Being without commissariat or clothing stores, they may be deemed merely a marching rabble, kept together by dint of the bastinado ; a host of locusts, wasting and destroying. The poor villagers fly from their approach as from the pestilence. They had completely sacked this village, and with difficulty did I find supplies from Nickpy to Sershem.

There is no country so abounds with ruins, perhaps, as Persia ; partly occasioned by plague, partly by oppression ; the mud walls soon melt

away into their native soil, there being no cement of any kind, nor straw to bind them. Here I met another "kafelah" of pilgrims, similar to the one already alluded to as the Meshedees, bearing the Mahomedan standard of the Crescent and the hand of Ali. Some of the females were seated in "kajawahs," a sort of panniers slung over the horse, just large enough to take a woman. They must be nicely poised, and the unequal weight is generally made up by a large stone. I need not say they are well covered over with a shawl or wrapper, according to the quality of the occupant. When I first saw these things, and had no idea of the panniers' contents, I enquired of the muleteer what he was conveying so carefully? "Zan ast Sahib." "A woman!" I exclaimed. Up starts the female, not only to my great astonishment, but nearly upsetting her companion on the other side.

I do love the vagabondising about in the Persian villages, which I have done for months at a time; and so fascinated was I with this rustic life, that I had a notion of becoming a Ketkodesh myself. This wish was somewhat cooled by what I saw at Sardaha, where his authority went for nothing in a trifling dispute amongst the natives; for an

object of but small value they came to broken heads and bloody strife. So earnest are the Persians in every thing that regards *self*, that the combatants fought furiously for a coin of small amount. The incident amused me. For money they have such an "itching palm," that it is dangerous to trust even confidential servants.

Still I liked to be amongst the Persians, and memory loves to dwell on my Asiatic travel. Sometimes breakfasting on a grassy knoll by the brook's side, the wallet is turned out for some cold rice of yesterday's meal, the village supplying bread and "moss" or sour milk—a most delicious beverage. I like this original mode of feeding: there is something so unaffected in partaking of such simple supplies; nature is sustained, not loaded with food. Sometimes with bridle in hand, the horse grazes at my feet, or presumes to dispute with me the grass which I occupy, whilst, at lazy length, I am smoking my pipe of ease. How superior all this to the artificial misnamed *luxuries* of life!—the servants in the distance greedily swallowing the remains of your meal; then girding on their pistols, adjusting the bridles, and giving notice of being ready to depart.

CHAPTER XIV.

PERSIAN AVARICE.

FROM the prince to the peasant the vice of avarice prevails to an eminent degree in Persia. Money is not only the great lever, but the very stamina of existence in this country; and the love of it is so engraved in the Persian character, as to amount to a perfect absorption of thoughts and ideas. I trace this to the despotic sway exercised by the sovereign over his subjects. The acquisition of riches may be deemed dangerous in Persia, and the victim is often marked out for spoliation, sometimes for death. The tenacity of keeping, and ingenuity in concealing money is remarkable amongst the Persians. I have seen

them clothed in rags; I have travelled with seeming mendicants, to whom I thought a pipe of tobacco to be a charity—the lining of his pack-saddle being at the time stuffed with ducats. I never saw any people in whom the love of money was so inherent. To overhear their conversations, it is all about “pul”—money; and it is astonishing to all enquirers from whence they draw their supplies, being, as they are, without gold or silver mines, and the balance of trade being so much against Persia, as to require horse-loads of ducats being sent by almost every Tatar to Constantinople. On my first arrival in Persia, there was a very alarming scarcity of gold, owing to the heavy contributions imposed by Russia as an indemnification for the late war, amounting to eight crores of tomauns, or about three millions sterling.

The governor of Maraga, Jaffier Kouli Khan, died during my stay at Tabreez, and was supposed to have possessed immense wealth. The custom of burying money in the ground is not unusual in Persia, and in this way it was reported that he had deposited large sums. Whilst on his death-bed, being informed that his remaining days could be but few, nothing could prevail upon him to

reveal the place of its interment. Some creditors, therefore, became clamorous, and he obtained a dispensation from the Ameer y Nizam, that he should die in peace from their importunities. His father had been known to have buried large sums of money twice, and on both occasions to have murdered the servant that accompanied him, to prevent disclosures. So decided was the public opinion that Jaffier Kouli Khan had large treasures deposited in the ground, that the government authorities commenced a search after his death, assisted by the Ameer himself. Long and fruitless was the search—nothing was found; his servants were bribed—were threatened, but with the same result; and at length were cruelly bastinadoed, in the hope that they would divulge that of which they knew nothing. What a system! the toils and anxieties which one man expends to acquire the “operant poison,” another expends to consign it again to the bowels from whence it came.

Nothing touches the compassion of majesty so much as the sight of money; it is irresistible; it is money which raised him to the throne; it is money which keeps him there, it may be said; it

will purchase every thing within his gift, even life itself, of which many instances are related in Persian history. His late Majesty, Futtee Ali Shah, was very ingenious in extracting money from his subjects. Does the King want to build a palace—he dips into his subjects' pockets for the ways and means; does he mean to marry either of his sons—all “the pomp and circumstance” must be paid for by the people. In this way they almost curse the “sadir,” as it is called, or public requisition, when proclaimed by the herald of despotism. Has he received some miraculous cure from the “hakem bashi”—immediately he sends out to the villages to announce the miracle—“inshallah,” help me to pay the doctor. Presently two or three thousand tomana are collected; but only one-half goes to the doctor, the remainder finds its way into the royal treasury.

Ingenuity is tortured to feed the royal avarice, which will even extend so low that Majesty would make the rounds of the bazaars occasionally to see what he could pick up. “Very good cloth—the King would like a coat of this;” with profound humility at the honour, it is immediately delivered to the attendants. In this way

he sometimes levied contributions to a great extent.

Many amusing anecdotes are related by Sir John Malcolm, the best historian that we have of Persia, of the late Shah's ingenious contrivances for getting the money out of his subjects' pockets; amongst others, that he would sometimes challenge some of the Khans of the court to shoot at a mark for a certain sum, perhaps the amount of four or five hundred tomauns. Of course the royal honour can never be declined, and Majesty must have the first shot. He was reputed to be an excellent marksman; yet, lest he should fail, and so large a sum being at stake, some contrivance was necessary to put it beyond risk. The sheep is brought out at a great distance, its leg is tied with a long rope, held by one of the attendants in the confidence of the King, who is instructed the moment he fires to pull down the animal, as though it had dropped dead by the ball. The distance is too great for the Khans to be supposed to see the royal *ruse*, although every one is acquainted with it before he goes to the field. In this way Majesty has won many a wager from his Khans, delighted at the success of his wonderful stratagems.

But practices of a more disgraceful nature were sometimes resorted to, to replenish the royal coffers, and the contagious example infects not only the members of government, but extends to almost all classes of society; even traps of vice are laid to catch delinquents, that the vizier may profit by the penalties; of which many disgusting instances occurred during my being at Tehran. Intrigues, on a larger scale, emanate from the court: it is scarcely to be imagined what iniquities are planned, with a view to taxation.

The British residence was robbed during my stay in Persia, though not at the time occupied by the Elchee. An English colonel's lady was plundered of property to the value of two hundred tomauns. Complaints were immediately made to the Zelli Sultaun, the governor of Tehran, and to the Vizier, requesting that the thing might be enquired into, and the money paid; but nothing was done; and it was presumed that the Vizier had profited by the robbery.

Such is the fallen state of honour and principle amongst the Persians, that civil robbery is no crime; the end always justifies the means; so that money is obtained, no matter how. Inge-

nuity in this way is a merit. M—— Khan, the governor of Resht, being very rich, the King wanted to extract some money from him; but having no fair pretence for so doing, he hit upon the expedient of frightening him, as it were, out of his government, by saying he had been offered one hundred thousand tomauns by another Khan to instal him into it. “Be jan y Shah raust ast.” By the soul of the King ’tis true. “I am your slave,” said the Khan; “I am your sacrifice,” and so he certainly was to this extent, being obliged to pay the money.

Another instance was related to me, and well authenticated. A Khan was dismissed from his government in Azerbaijan by Abbas Meerza. He applied to the King, and offered him forty thousand tomauns to be reinstated in his government. “Barikallah,” said his Majesty, “Besher Shah,” by the King’s head we will make his face white. A “rackum,” or royal order, was promised for the Khan’s reinstatement; the money was paid, and the “rackum” given. The Khan was so flattered with the King’s condescension, that, to use his own metaphor, “he had drunk deep of the bowl of vanity, and as its contents passed over the

palate of exultation, they filled his heart with arrogance and his bowels with ambition." Mounting the stirrup of impatience, and vaulting into the saddle of hope, he presented his "rackum" to the prince. Who shall paint his astonishment when the prince refused to obey it! "Laullah a ilullah," said he, "There is no God but God," and then following it up with "foozoel," "gho-raumsang," fool, scoundrel "Beru," be off; and he was threatened with the bastinado. Returning once more to the King, he complained bitterly of this treatment, and was only ridiculed as having any fault to find—the "rackum" had been granted according to promise, and it was for him to contend with the existing authorities. The prince was so exasperated at the Khan's application to the King, that he invited him back, with fair promises of remuneration, and then pillaged him of every thing he had, took away from him his villages, and sent him into exile.

Persian finances are much deranged in this way; they grant what is called a "hugct" on a particular district. These are generally payable just after harvest time. If the bill cannot be paid in money, they pay it in corn or other produce.

This is a matter of arrangement between the debtor or creditor. Get what you can is the general order of the day where money is so scarce. The chancellor of the exchequer's budget must be of rather a miscellaneous description here, particularly of income. Instead of post-office, excise, tea, it is wheat and barley, straw and rice. I only know that his exchequer bills were at a terrible discount when I was at Tabreez, amounting almost to fifty per cent. The merchants will have nothing to do with them, since there is considerable danger in asking for payment. They will grant orders sometimes on the customs, and, perhaps, the farmer of the customs will accept it at long date. In the meanwhile he is removed, and the new comer recognises none of the obligations of his predecessors.

It is wonderful the labyrinth these people get into by their crooked ways, when a tenth part of the labour would suffice in the straight path. The remote parts of his Majesty's empire sometimes get into a very disorganised state, entirely respecting "the ways and means;" and they take such desperate measures to raise the said "ways and means" as are quite unknown in other parts

of the world. This occurred during my sojourn in Persia, at Bushire, where considerable wealth was accumulated, belonging to merchants and others, in the transit of goods from India. The resident merchants were known to be very rich, and these considerations offered a tempting bait to those who were stronger than they.

It is not an uncommon thing in this part of the country to find organised bands of plunderers, and in this affair they conducted themselves most systematically. A large party of them went down to Bushire; indeed, an irresistible force to any thing which the inhabitants could oppose to them. Individuals paraded the town, offering, for a certain sum, to certain rich people, protection for their property from the plunder *about to take place*. Some of them yielded to this exaction, and were actually so protected; whilst their less fortunate neighbours lost their *all*. A Jew stood out to make a very hard bargain; they asked him one hundred tomauns; he offered them twenty, and so on to fifty, but would go no farther; the consequence was, that he lost ultimately many thousands of tomauns. Bushire was literally *sacked*. Forty persons are said to have been killed, and

ninety persons wounded. Property to the amount of thirty lacs of rupees, or three hundred thousand pounds sterling, is said to have been carried off by a desperate and ferocious gang, gloating over their prey, although stained with so much blood.

It was said at the time that this gang had been organised by a prince of the blood, the governor of Shiraz; although he did not personally head it, he was its founder, and shared the produce of its infamy. Such was the *on-dit* of the day. Sir John Malcolm, in his Persian Sketches, tells of a certain Khan, who when he first viewed the wealth and extent of Calcutta, exclaimed, "What a fine place for plunder!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE "RAMAZAN."

THIS is the name of the ninth month of the Hegira, and is the Lent fast of the Persians. It was instituted thus by Mahomet:—"The month of Ramazan shall ye fast, in which the Koran was sent down from heaven, a declaration unto men, &c. God would make this an ease unto you, and would not make it a difficulty unto you, that ye may fulfil the number of days and glorify God, for that he hath directed you, and ye may give thanks." Its commencement (in February) was governed by the appearance of the new moon; the moment the brilliant crescent shows itself in the heavens, the gun fires, and the fast commences,

and lasts for forty days, from sun-rise to sun-set, which is always announced by the firing of a gun; when, even if the hand is in the pilaff, in a moment feeding is suspended.

The worshippers of Mahomet now flock to their mosques:—I hear the Muzzins calling the Azan from the roofs more distinctly than usual—"God is great, come to prayers, and ask forgiveness of your sins. I summon you with a clear voice." Seemingly, at this season, greater ardour prevails in all their religious services. I see the good Musselmans sitting about in the bazaars, and at the gates of the city, reading aloud their Koran, and sometimes the dervishes, with their striped conical caps, ornamented with passages from their scriptures; they are to be seen chaunting with the most holy fervour from that book, of which they boast that its influence has extended beyond the scriptures of the Messiah, and that now a hundred and forty millions of people acknowledge its sway, and are governed by its doctrines!

Really, it is astonishing to see the zeal which animates these people, literally "pressing forward" to their temples, and without any adventitious aid of Koran Societies, &c., to keep alive the flame of

religious love ; but a sort of soul-absorbing interest, superseding all other interests. I have seen the merchant, in the midst of his worldly duties, draw the book from his pocket, elevate it to his forehead, then kiss it, and begin to read aloud, or to chaunt from its inspiring pages—no matter who is present. No false shame is felt at his being thus seen engaged with the Prophet ; it is the breath of life to him ; a good Musselman will tell you not only how many words but how many letters it contains.

Then again as to prayer, five times a day, wherever they may be, at noon or at sun-set, down they drop on their knees, and begin their prostrations and genuflexions, turning towards Mecca, kissing the carpet, and with the utmost humility proving themselves devoted to the service of the impostor.

I was rather taken by surprise at this on my first day in Persia, which was at Makoo.* We

* A large painting of the wonderful cave of Makoo, by Colonel Monteith, was exhibited at Somerset House in 1830. This immense cavern is said to be in breadth more than a thousand feet, and in depth about six hundred feet, sufficient, on an emergency, to harbour all the population of Makoo. The road to it was most difficult, by a sort of corkscrew ascent, on which I could scarcely keep my saddle. Most terrific mountains overhung it, giving it an air of romantic terror ; these contained galleries accessible only by ropes, and here it was said the Khan's treasures were contained.

were invited by the Khan to dine with him, where I first heard the doleful sound of the Muzzin, without understanding it, and immediately down dropped the Khan on his knees, and began praying. He experienced frequent interruptions from his servants, &c., to which he would reply, and then pray on again. So he went on for half an hour, I drinking in the wine of astonishment all the time,—this being my first initiation to Mahomedan worship.

I have been often amused, when going round the walls of the city, to witness the groups of people watching the declining sun, half famished as it were, and actually suffering from want, at least of their darling tchibook; but nothing could induce them to transgress the commands of the Prophet.

The Armenians also have their fasts at this season; and I have been assured by those well conversant with the subject, that they not only carry it to the *threshold* of starvation, but *over* the threshold, and that they have even *died* under the penance! It were endless to narrate the numerous instances which came before me of Mahomedan zeal;—they taught me this humiliating truth, that

such is unknown to the followers of the Messiah in my own country; and I could not but reflect that Mahomedan zeal, with Christian faith, would build up such a religion as would adorn *his* temples, and trample idolatry in the dust.

“ Oh, for a Christian faith, with Pagan zeal.”

It is not uncommon for the Musselmans to get their Koran by heart! Where shall we find this among professing Christians with *their* Scriptures? It is astonishing to notice the difference between the cold calculating Protestant, who ekes out his religious duties with Sunday observances, merely to pacify his conscience, and the religious feeling intermixed with the customs of the Persians! Their Koran seems to be the only reigning *fashion* amongst them; it is their spiritual food; they enjoy it, they feed upon it; and so far as I can judge from their external duties, of charity and prayer, it is the very animus of their existence. Does the prince wear any ornaments on his person—they are called “amulets,” or charms, principally of the cornelian stone, beautifully engraved with Koran inscriptions. Thus the doctrines and promises of the Prophet pervade all their institutions,

even in the minute details of domestic life. Does the Mahomedan summon you to dinner—it is with a “Bismillah,” in “the name of God;” when he has done, it is with an “Alham, dulillah,” “thanks to God;” does he contemplate a journey—it is with “Inshullah,” “please God;” does he take leave—it is with “Khoda hafiz shuma,” “may God take you to his holy protection;” and so on, literally fulfilling the Apostle’s commands, “whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

When shall we see nominal Christians following this Mahomedan *fashion* (if I may so term it)? Prayer and praise a *fashion*! the Bible a *fashion*! when shall we see our armlets and bracelets adorned with Bible inscriptions of “rejoicing in hope,” “patient in tribulation,” &c. The Mahomedans would have more shame to have it known that they had *omitted* prayer, than the professed Christian would that he had daily performed this duty; and as to their sabbaths, they begin them on the previous evening; and so far from any exclamation with them, “what a weariness it is; when will the sabbath be over, that we may set forth corn and sell wheat;” on the contrary, they are eagerly

pressing forward to enjoy its privileges. Here the moolahs are in the market-places, praying amongst the people, and testifying from their scriptures—"there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

This is particularly the case at this season of the Ramazan. I have been often stopped in the bazaars by the crowds of people, flocking towards the mosques, at the cry of the muzzins. I had many a difficult question to answer Hadji, who was curious to know as to our Ramazan customs in England. "What, eat and drink all day!" said he; "no morning prayers, no church going! and this is your boasted religion which is to overflow a world!" and he scorned me with the term Ghiaour, which is the reproach in this country, where

'To be a Christian and the name of Christ,
Is an abomination.'

It may be objected that to introduce religion into the ordinary concerns of life, would clog their operations, and that it cannot be associated with this world's engagements. But in the mirror of travel I have seen the contrary. It appears to me that religious duties might and should be the primary work

of all men. This is evidenced before me in the Mahomedans. Does the sovereign preside over the destinies of the empire with less zeal and vigour for having first implored the blessing of the "King of kings," whose vicegerent he is? Does the statesman come to the council board with less power of intellect for having first enquired of the Ruler of all things whether they should go up to Ramoth Gilead or forbear? * Does the captain of the host go forward with less assurance of victory for having implored the aid of the God of battles? I might extend the enquiry to the lawyer at the bar, the merchant in the counting-house, or the mechanic at his bench. I would say with the Mahomedans, let religion pervade every profession and pursuit in life; it will strengthen, invigorate, and purify the mind.

I must confess that I felt "shame burn my cheek to cinder," at being twitted by a Mahomedan with our cold, frigid, Protestant worship, as compared with their animating zeal, which at this season of the Ramazan was so moving the followers of Ma-

* The only blessing which I remember being invoked on the national councils (independent of the Liturgy) is on that of the meetings of parliament.

homet. I find, too, that in the Greek church religious observances are mixed up with all their institutions, civil and political; the armies never march except headed by the priest. I recollect once attending the Russian camp at Erzroume, at a grand fête, on account of some victories of General Paskevitch: the priest headed the ranks, and publicly gave thanks to the God of battles; the soldiers, bareheaded, responded with their Hallelujahs, and the whole army joined in the Te Deum of thanksgiving. I never heard a service more impressive; and instead of the noisy ebullitions of a riotous soldiery, they had converted their camp into a cathedral—their shouts into praises.

The zeal of the Mahomedans is further evinced in erecting temples to their God. As I lay on my mat in the caravansery at Kazvine, I had opportunity to watch my neighbours: a water-melon, some rice, and “kiabobs,” roasted sausages, formed the daily repasts of some of the wealthiest merchants in Persia; but their ambition was expended on a large mosque, which they were building to the glory of their prophet; I saw it in its incipient state, with fine promise of a splendid structure. They contented themselves with the necessities of

life, in order to nourish their religion with their wealth.

The bazaars at this season of the Ramazan * are dressed up with peculiar gaiety, and abound with fruits, "gezenjibin," or manna, and a variety of candied mixtures, rather indigestible. The fast is succeeded by a feast; many people eat by night and sleep by day; the abstinence of the morning is amply made up by the feed of the evening.

* This is the season of our Ramazan or Lent, which in all countries is so respected, except in England. I have mixed with almost every sect, and acquainted myself with their creeds, from the Ghebres to the Moslem, with all of whom this fast is a prominent feature—and what do I find in my own country? It is true the churches are opened, but do I see the people flocking to them, like the Mahomedans to their mosques! Where is their practice of charity, self-denial, coming out from the world, &c.; and are the commands of the Messiah so rigidly observed as are those of the Prophet amongst his people? The legislature once interfered to close the portals of dissipation during the passion week, the same power has opened them again to masquings and revellings, at which the Moslems would revolt at any season. Furthermore, a member of the same legislature once proposed to desecrate the Sabbath to the level of other days! The moulahs would have proscribed him from the mosque.

CHAPT XVI.

MAHOMEDAN VENGEANCE.

DURING my stay in Persia, that awful event took place at Tehran, of massacring the Russian ambassador, M. Grybydoff, and all his suite, (saving M. Maltzoff, a secretary, and three Cossacks,) being thirty-nine in number. The Persian history scarcely presents so barbarous an outrage on humanity; nor need I narrate the circumstances, which were soon after so ably set forth in "Blackwood's Magazine." It was a storm of fanatic fury, raised by the moolahs, which swept away these devoted victims. Islamism was said to be in danger; the Ghiaours had insulted their religion, and never was the fury of the Persian

- populace supposed to have been so excited as by those provocations offered by the Russians. The government had no power to check the sanguinary impetuosity of the mob—they did their utmost.

There can be no doubt that the Russian ambassador brought upon himself this heavy judgment, principally, I believe, occasioned by wicked servants around him. Yet this cannot be offered as an excuse for one of the most horrid and barbarous tragedies ever committed in any nation, on those who claimed its hospitality and protection.

The Shah immediately sent a letter to Abbas Meerza, detailing the events, and requiring his assistance. Having procured copies and translations of this, and of other royal letters on the subject, they may be deemed interesting, since they have never appeared in print, and are strictly from the Persian documents now in my possession.

From Ali Shah, dated 6th Sharbon (1st March, 1829).

“The condition of bleeding hearts who can tell! your feelings will participate with mine. This courier I send by the express orders of his Majesty, which if I do communicate to you, how

can I anticipate your sorrow and grief; if I do not I am in peril of the King's command. What I am desired to do I am bound to perform. The Russian ambassador, when he arrived in this city, every civility due to him on the part of the King and government was shown, and all the chief officers of the court occupied themselves in thinking how they might please him and send him back satisfied; likewise as regards his personal comforts, that he might give a good account of the impressions he had received. Many unpleasant circumstances originating with the ambassador, the court passed over in compliment to him; amongst others, that of two Armenians who had murdered a Mahomedan, and took refuge in his house, and the King forgave them for his sake. A Georgian, by the name of Roustum, a servant of the ambassador, who had been brought up from his infancy as a slave, had done many offensive things. A few characters, similar to him, were taken by the ambassador as his servants and guides; their behaviour was very disgusting to the public; they imposed on the ambassador by false accounts, and did every thing to irritate the two governments by wrong information. The

following is an instance:—A person of the royal Kajar tribe (as the literal translation has it, 'having an illness in his nose,' meaning want of sense), who speaks random phrases, the ambassador took him to his house by the advice of Roustum, from whom he heard every thing abusive of the King and his government, which he was encouraged to speak. Meerza Yhacoub, an eunuch and chief manager of the Andaroon, for many years a Musselman, and in the employ of the King, formerly an Armenian, who was bought as a slave, was for a long time a trustworthy servant, but latterly he had stolen cash and jewels to a large amount, and took refuge in the ambassador's house. The King said he would present him to the ambassador if he wished it, but the property must be returned. The ambassador replied, that his Majesty must recover it by law; the government made no objection to this, but were disposed to do so. Meerza Yhacoub, being protected by the ambassador, having referred to a court of justice, was convicted of the theft. He then publicly blasphemed the Prophet, and abused the King to the whole court; he also began to abuse the people as well as the government. Every one in

the city felt indignation at this act, and would not endure it. In the midst of these affairs the ambassador's servant came to inform him that there were two women, formerly brought from a Turkish province as slaves, in the house of Allaya Khan Kajar; that they were Georgians, and wished to return to their country. The ambassador demanded them instantly, but the Khan told him they were brought from the Turkish provinces, and not Georgians; he would not admit these reasonings, and insisted on their being given up. The Shah finding himself cautious, not to offend the ambassador, ordered Allaya Khan to send the women with his servants, that the ambassador might question them personally, and find that they were not Georgians. By the order of the King he did so; but the ambassador sent the servants back and kept the women. The custom of the country is never to permit a woman to remain in a strange man's house, which attaches disgrace to them and their family. Besides keeping the women, it happened that Meerza Yhacoub had an evening party amongst the servants of the ambassador, and that he brought a low woman to the house; the Armenian women were then

brought to join this mixed party of Russians; they began to sigh and grieve. The people felt very much the grievances which these two women suffered till the morning; many applications were made by the servants of Allaya Khan to give up the women, which was refused. The first dispute took place between the ambassador's guards and these servants, which guards were Persians. A quarrel ensued, after which a mob collected, but the ambassador's friends and his servants began and killed a few of the mob with their swords and their guns. The friends of the dead collected and raised a greater mob; the news reached the King's palace. The moment it occurred, my humble self, with two or three thousand men, proceeded to the spot. We made all haste. As we proceeded, we began to beat our way, to quell the people, till we reached the ambassador's house; but the business was finished; all I could do was to save one of the ambassador's secretaries, and three of the Cossack guards. I brought them through the midst of the mob and saved them; all the rest were killed; and the guards of the King, who were posted at the ambassador's house, and did their utmost to protect it, were all killed.

From thirty to forty of the men with me were wounded, but I had rather they had been all killed than that this business should have taken place. By my God and the salt of the King, I had rather myself and children had been all killed, than thus shamefully to stand before you. I do not know, when this letter reaches you, and you know its contents, in what condition you will find yourself. His Majesty says, 'from the revolving of the heavens this has taken place.'* I am here with the ambassador's first secretary, to whom the King makes his apologies and attempts at condolence, and you will do so likewise to the English ambassador and the Russian chiefs that are there: make all apologies you can, and send a person off to Teflis, to explain the proper circumstances. Nevertheless, the whole empire of Persia is bashful and ashamed at this event; but we wish them to know that our servants were not knowing of it; in any way that you think fit to apologise do not fail to offer them."

The Prince immediately sent off a letter to

* The Persians have an idea that the heavens revolve, and that each change produces an event, and according to the doctrine of the Koran they are fatalists.

General Paskevitch, at Teflis, of which the following is a copy (after enumerating his titles with many compliments, &c.) "As being much confused and surprised by the circumstances of the times which we have lately received from the unhappy event which has taken place, we do not know how to open the gate of conversation to you. Mr. Amburger was here (the Russian consul at Tabreez), and he has witnessed our present state; of course he will explain to you to what degree we are grieved and confounded; that we were willing for all our brothers and all our families to be sacrificed than that such a stain should remain on the country. You, I hope, will judge, this is not a thing any human being could have thought of, or that means would have been taken to prevent it; but it is a business so sudden and accidental, done by the low and ignorant people of the town, and their shameful deeds are left to our future days. But at this moment all the government servants, and all the chiefs of the town, are in grief and mourning at the event, and the King has a thousand grievous thoughts for the same. To-day, on the 17th Sbarhon (February), his august firmaun has reached from Kalifat to our graceful selves, and a

strict command from his Majesty respecting this event to receive your advice on the subject, and by the same to judge in what way we are to justify ourselves in the presence of your Emperor; to receive it from you, and by this to present the event to his Imperial Majesty. Agreeably to the order of the King we have written this to you, and have sent Meerza Macsood to your presence, that he may on this matter consult you, and if you think proper that Meerza Macsood should proceed on to Petersburg with the letter to his most high Excellence, the great and supreme Emperor of the Russias, &c. The letter from the King of Kings to the benign Emperor with apologies will follow by Mr. Maltzoff, in order to reach the imperial gate of his Majesty; but the King's orders are these, that the Persian government has purchased the friendship of the Russian government with heart and soul, from which his Majesty would not withhold his hand. Tehran and Petersburg he considers under one government. If such circumstance had happened at Petersburg, of course the chiefs would have taken some course to remedy it. We expect you to let us know what plan would be attempted in the case, without considering that

we are separate governments, that we should execute your advice without any change, that we should act upon this advice, and after doing so to apologise for the deed which had been done at Tehran, that we should not leave the government under the load of shamefulness. However, the circumstance of the event which has happened this year has affected me the most from six sides (the heavens, the earth, and the four quarters of the world). I have melancholy grievances, but as you with your pure heart and kindness of nature brought to a close every thing last year, I expect from your usual frankness, that this affair will be concluded amicably, so as to convince his Imperial Majesty that we were not at all aware of it, and it was without our knowledge or wish. He must be convinced that the Persian government will do their utmost to punish with vengeance the individuals committing this offence, and that none of them will be spared. His Majesty is exerting himself to do away from himself this shameful transaction, and to receive from the Russian government their assurances of satisfaction for what he has done. Meerza Macsood will explain to you wholly on the subject."

From the Shah of Persia to his son Abbas Meerza.

“ My auspicious and blessed son,—I am at a loss to report to you concerning the changeableness of this revolving sphere. Glory to God! what wonderful accidents may sometimes happen. After that Meerza Grybydoff, the ambassador and the independent minister of the excellent government of Russia, arrived at the capital, and we were glad to find his arrival to be the means of the accomplishment of the treaty between the two governments, and we treated him with every possible kindness and hospitality, to please him beyond every thing, at the different courts held by his Majesty, by various attentions and enquiries, and he took his leave exceedingly pleased and contented. By some unexpected folly of Meerza Yhacoub, some delay takes place at his departure; at length the affair comes to this sort of wonderful disgrace, and there happens some circumstances which nobody has yet seen to happen in this government, nor has imagined it could ever happen. It would never come to my mind that the lower class of the metropolis ever could or would become the means of such imprudent conduct. After

Meerza Yhacoub went to the ambassador to seek his protection, the ambassador sent him, accompanied by Meerza Yani Khan, to Eich Akase, or the chief eunuch of the seraglio, with a message that we are going to take Meerza Yhacoub with us. Some of the nobles of the court, and those who dealt with Meerza Yhacoub, then complained to his Majesty that Meerza Yhacoub is concerned with the money affairs of the treasure, and the management of trade with the harem and the treasury; and, so far as we can see, at least forty or fifty thousand tomauns of the money of the government is in his hands at present. His Majesty was pleased to command that they should detain him till all should be discharged—his accounts settled, and the different affairs in which he is concerned, then he might be given up to the ambassador. From our respect to the ambassador, and being always willing to comply with his wishes, we commanded that no one should interfere with Meerza Yhacoub at present, and let him be sent back to the ambassador accompanied by an interpreter, that in the presence of the ambassador he may settle his accounts; in short, it was determined that they should go to the law the next day. When Meerza

Yhacoub, accompanied by the people of the ambassador, was at the court of law in the presence of the judges and moolahs, and some of the inhabitants of the metropolis, he began to insult both the religion and the government; his impertinent speech terrified and afflicted both high and low, and a great disturbance arose amongst the people, wherefore, in the capital of Islam this degree of insult should be offered to religion; but as the people had seen the degree of kindness of his Majesty and the nobles towards him, they bore his insults for a time, and remained silent. In the meanwhile, two women from the court of *Moosh*, who had formerly become prisoners, and had fallen into the hands of the general, were demanded by the ambassador, under the pretence that they were persons of Kirklesia, notwithstanding the inspectors had enquired, and knew perfectly well that they were not so. Yet, as the ambassador desired to enquire personally, we, in order to comply with his wishes, commanded that the two women should be taken to the ambassador, and that he might do so and send them back again; they were taken—he enquired and knew that they were not Russian subjects, and yet he would not send them back,

and kept them for a pledge for some uncertain prisoners which he claimed, however much he was desired to send back these women, who for many years were Moslems—and whenever we know of any prisoners whom you mention, we will send them to you—this was no use. The complaint and lamentation of the women, who were highly displeased and dishonoured at being in his house, reached the hearing of the people, and became the means of increasing the tumult; yet from the fear of the punishment of his Majesty, no one showed any boldness in it. It happened that on the night of the same day of the transaction, some of the people of the ambassador had seized a woman in the street, and had carried her off violently; and had insulted, the same day, one of the syeeds at the public bazaars beyond every thing. On the following morning, the lower orders, and the rest of the community, in a mob (washing their hands with their souls), with the intention of bringing out the women from the house of the ambassador, unexpectedly attacked his house; and on the other hand, the people of the ambassador and his guards opposing the people, they killed four or five Mus-

seltmans with the blows of the musket balls, and wounded several. The people on seeing the bodies of the wounded, would not be pacified by any thing, nor listen to their moolahs, and the very children of the town, who were the leaders of the ignorant, with clubs and stones in their hands, ascended the roof and gate of the ambassador's house ; the soldiers of the ambassador, and amongst them were some of your servants, Sulyman, the nephew of Eich Akasi, and others, who, by command of his Majesty had carried a message to the ambassador from his uncle, concerning the settlement of the affair in question. By some fatal accident, a blow reached the Elchee himself, who was killed, and this disgrace was brought upon our government. At first, when the report was brought to his Majesty, the children of the Prince Zelli Sultaun, my chief guard, with the cavalry of the guards, and the rest of my servants then at the court, were sent for the prevention of this disturbance, but the excitement of the mob was to such a degree, that they could not quell it. Moreover, the lower orders in this revolution insulted and abused Zelli Sultaun himself; and at last the up-

roar of the mob extended so far that the gates of the palace were closed, but the soldiers of the guards, and the servants of Zelli Sultaun, were able to do so far as to save, with the greatest difficulty, the first secretary and three others of the ambassador's servants. His Majesty is puzzled why, and astonished that, notwithstanding the willingness which our mind cultivated between the treaty of these two governments, these wonderful things should happen, and particularly such as has never happened before in this government—the uproar of the mob and the resolution of the ignorant people have never had any connexion with this government. Now and then news would reach us from other governments, that the people had set up some revolution, having done so and so, dismissing some minister, or changing the government. We are always surprised and astonished to hear how the affairs of sovereignty may be carried on with these difficulties. In those days when Hadji Khalib Khan, ambassador from this government, was killed in India by some accident of this sort, we would not believe at first that it was not done intentionally—till we experienced the kindness of the English government, and beheld

the firmness of their promise and contract; then we became assured the accident happened providentially, not intentionally. However, the grief and anxiety which have found their voice to our royal mind, will not come into any description by writing, and I need not explain and represent them. We value the friendship and treaty of that government more than you, my son, but our sorrow is beyond expression at this accident, because the publication of the circumstance will be the cause of disgrace to this government. Although no sensible man would expect this sort of outrage, yet we deem it necessary that we should inform that son his excellency Meerza Amburger is there—you must inform him of the truth of this perfectly. We do not consider any difference between these two governments in regard to our friendship and union. Tehran and St. Petersburg are the same—let them suppose that this accident has happened in that metropolis, not in this—and whatever they would do in such a case, we will do the same, according to any two religions or laws of either government. Whatever punishment is to be inflicted, or recompense given, we are perfectly ready to do so; and moreover, certainly the regards of

the friendship and the cultivation of the contract are beyond any thing in our consideration ; the expulsion of this disgrace from our government is our duty, and we shall do it. The bodies of the Russians are all buried with due respect to them, and we have treated with the greatest kindness, and shall continue to do so, the secretary and others saved. The leaders of the mob we have punished already in some degree, and shall continue to do so, and are expecting to receive some intelligence from that son concerning the accomplishment of some reparation for this accident by Meerza Amburger : and we are about to send the deputy ambassador, accompanied by Razan Alikhum, with an answer to the correspondence of the Emperor, with royal firmans to General Paskevitch within three days ; these people, being present, having witnessed the transactions, they can state the truth better than any one else. In short, we demand assistance of that son in reparation of this disgrace."

His Majesty's Gazette of this horrible outrage being so very copious, leaves me but little to add respecting it. The ambassador, from the time of his arrival in Persia, had made himself very obnoxious

at the court of Tabreez in various ways—amongst others, that of coming into the presence of the Prince with dirty boots, thereby spoiling his carpets, than which nothing can be more offensive, and which only the courteous urbanity of an Abbas Meerza would overlook. At Zenjen, on his way to Tebran, he took upon himself to interfere amongst the Armenian and Georgian subjects, to the extent of tying up and punishing most severely a Mahomedan, for having, as he said, inveigled away an Armenian woman; in which there was no truth. This gave such offence to the people, that they began to complain of their Shah, that he had not power to protect them against the Muscovite infidels. At Kazvine he did the same, offering protection to all the renegadoes of the government, and interfering amongst the Georgians and Armenians in such a manner, that the people were quite indignant at his conduct; and he was seriously advised to leave the place, or they would not answer for his personal safety. The remainder of the catastrophe is told by the Shah.

The guard spoken of by his Majesty consisted of a hundred men from the choice troops of the Shah. The women alluded to, as being detained

all night, were most barbarously used by the Russians; in the morning they fled from the house almost naked, running through the streets imploring to be revenged on the infidels. This attracted a large crowd of the people, who, inflamed by their cries, went towards the ambassador's house, full of revenge for the injuries they had received. The guards (already alluded to) fired, and killed six of the Musselmans; this excited the mob to the greatest fury; the bodies of these true believers were taken up and exposed at six different mosques; the moolahs made use of them to excite the people to a sort of frenzy, and to revenge the spilling of Mahomedan blood on their murderers the Muscovites.

A body of thirty thousand people had now congregated together, with an inflammable feeling which nothing could resist, and such a tide poured towards the ambassador's house as threatened annihilation to it and to its inmates. Seeing the mob advance, it is said Mr. Grybydoff went forward with his sword drawn, but he was immediately knocked down by a stone on the temple; the mob crying out, "the Elchee is killed." Then being determined to massacre every one of the Russians,

they broke in and dispatched about thirty of them, including Cossacks.

In the mean time the King hearing of the tumult, sent his troops to the aid of the Russians, with Ali Shah at their head, as already described. Mr. Maltzoff, whom he saved, he smuggled through the mob in a Persian uniform. The three Cossacks were concealed in a stable. The number of the mob which were shot by the Russians was about thirty. Never was the fury of the Persians supposed to have been so excited as by those provocations offered by the Russians.

Meerza Yhacoub was the first that fell, and they dragged his body around the city, and flung it into a ditch. The mob, not content with massacring the poor victims, made piles of the human rubbish, dipped their hands in the blood of the Muscovites, and with horrid shouts mocked and derided the fallen dead. One man, in particular, was so incensed as to be seen cutting pieces of flesh from the slain. The body of the ambassador was found under the devoted heap, with a finger cut off, supposed to have been for plunder. It was deposited in the Armenian church; the remainder of the bodies were given over to the Armenians of the

town, who interred them in their own receptacles for the dead.

They searched diligently, even with lighted candles, through the house for more victims, it being intimated that there were some concealed (these were no doubt the three Cossacks alluded to). They then proceeded to the stables of the British residency, where they murdered seven or eight Russian servants, and carried off all their horses.

The unfortunate Mr. Grybydoff was only thirty-two years of age, a man of extraordinary talent as a linguist, and as an author he had much distinguished himself. His lady was at that time at Tabreez; she was the daughter of Prince Tchef-tekwadze, of Teflis. I saw her go off with the Russian consul already spoken of, though she was kept in ignorance of the tragical death of her husband.

On arrival of the news at Tabreez, the consternation of the Prince was excessive. He immediately sent for Colonel Macdonald, to consult with him what was to be done. A general mourning was ordered for eight days. The news arrived on the day of some grand fête; he gave

immediate orders for all rejoicings to be stopped on the penalty of twelve tomauns each person, and losing their toe nails. Meerza Macsood was sent off to Teflis to General Paskevitch with the letter of which a copy has been given, and some time after the body of the murdered ambassador arrived on its way to the same destination, for interment; it was lodged in an Armenian church outside the town, the Persians having a superstitious prejudice against corpses being received within the city gates.*

It was first stated that the apologies offered to General Paskevitch were deemed sufficient; and that to confirm the amicable feeling of the Russian government, another ambassador would be sent to Tehran, General Dolgorouky; and it was then thought the storm had blown over. But by a second dispatch it was stated that the affair must be settled at St. Petersburg, and not at Teflis. This occasioned great consternation to Abbas Meerza, who, at length, sent his son, Khousroof

* The gallant and much respected Major Hart died outside the city of Tabreez, in June 1830. To bring him in for interment in the Armenian church, the body was dressed up in full uniform, and brought in a "takht ravan," in an upright posture of seeming vitality.

Meerza, with the Ameer y Nizam, to the Russian capital, on a mission of apologies.*

I shall close my report of this tragical event at Tehran by a copy from the Petersburg Gazette respecting it, which I saw at Erzroume, when in the Russian camp, where the officers were very curious to hear my version of it from Persia. Monsieur Rodofinikin, the son of the oriental dragonian at the court of St. Petersburg, at

* I heard much of the movements of the Persian Prince, particularly at Tula, having followed soon after, and where I by chance fell in with the train of the Turkish ambassador, Halil Pasha, and was much amused at our mutual deceptions at the *Fabrique d'Armes*, a very large establishment, of which the Russians are justly proud. What with my cap, pelisse, &c. I was taken by the authorities as belonging to their suite. Once or twice they looked at me very hard, as much as to say, "Who are you?" still I passed on. The "conductor," (apparently a Russian officer) at length seeing that neither the Prince nor the Persians addressed me, began to suspect that I was not one of them, and a lady coming up enquiring how it was that I was not at the theatre last evening with the Pasha, I was so completely posed, that the officer could no longer forbear asking me who and what I was. On my replying, "*Un voyageur Anglois*," he burst into a loud laugh. "Well," said he, "and I too am all the way from Birmingham." It was a Mr. Jones, who wore the Russian epaulettes, as superintendent of his Imperial Majesty's *Fabrique d'Armes*. I spent the evening at his house, and was introduced to his family, the cause of his emigration was, his talent being worth more at Tula than at Birmingham.

whose tent we were at dinner, read the said gazette, of which the following is a copy :—

“ March 15—27, 1829. Letters received from Tehran inform us of a horrible catastrophe, which took place in that city on the 29th January, in consequence of a quarrel between some of the servants of our minister, Mr. Grybydoff, and some of the people. Some idlers being assembled in front of the minister's house during the quarrel, thought they ought to take part in it; and some amongst them being killed, an immense crowd flew from the bazaars to revenge their countrymen, forced the door of the house, scaled the walls in spite of the resistance of our Cossacks, and that of the Persian guards, who lost four men in this attack, and succeeded in penetrating into the interior apartments, where every one who ventured before the rage of the infuriated mob was massacred. In vain the Shah himself, accompanied by his son, Zelli Sultaun, governor-general of Tehran, arrived with a considerable armed force to arrest and disperse the wretches; it was too late—Mr. Grybydoff and his suite had been already victims of the assassins. The first

secretary of legation, Mr. Maltzoff, and three other individuals, have alone escaped the carnage. The Shah, Abbas Meerza, and all the court, are in the greatest consternation; the latter has ordered a mourning for eight days, anxious to give us all the satisfaction which we require. He proposes to send for that purpose to the Count Paskevitch d'Erivan, his eldest son, and the Kaimacan, to bring all the details, and all the explanations which the commander-in-chief can require respecting this disastrous event."

Thus ended this dreadful tragedy of the Persian mob. None of them were punished by the government, and no compensation was required. Khousroof Meerza was fêted every where in Russia; his reception by the Emperor was gracious and flattering, and, for the season, the Persian prince was the lion of St. Petersburg.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TATAR GALLOP.

ON the 23rd November I got into the saddle. The morning opened in a tempest on the Black Sea, to which I was turning my back ; it was tossed to and fro in foamy fury, agitated by one of those frightful storms, the result of "the elemental strife" of this part of the world. The ominous cloud, about the size of a man's hand, soon spread over the horizon, and seemed to awake the winds, which threatened destruction to all opposing objects. It was a magnificent sight, and I waited some time in hopes that the clouds would exhaust themselves, and that there would be some chance of a





tranquil atmosphere. But the rain continued to fall, the horses were ready, the burly Tatar became impatient, so we started.

On climbing the paved hills (for such they literally are) which bound the town of Trebisonde, we found them cut into flights of stairs, over which the horses climb with wonderful ease. The ground was partially covered with snow, and the wind blew from every point of the compass. I had agreed with the Tatar to take me about seven hundred miles to Tabreez, which he was to do in as many days, with five horses; one for the "surrigee," or guide, who takes the post horses from one station to another, such stations being from twenty to thirty miles apart, according to the villages; the Tatar's horse; my own; one baggage, and one kitchen horse, to carry pans, kettles, provisions, &c. The provisions consisted principally of coffee, tea, sugar, rice, &c.; the Tatar undertaking for bread, fowls, eggs, "yourt," or sour milk.

It is, however, precarious to trust too much to the purveyor, for the Tatars not only pay nothing to the villagers where they levy, but often tax them in coin, "for the skin of their teeth," as they call it.

My bargain with him was two thousand five hundred Turkish piastres, or about twenty-five pounds sterling, with a "lakshish," or present, on arrival, provided I was satisfied with his conduct. This bargain I made through my interpreter, the Tatar not speaking Persian; so that not a word of understanding existed between us beyond the indispensable tchibook and tobacco.

In such travel dilemmas, and where you commit yourself to the care of an entire stranger who may lead you into ambush, or betray you to the Koords, it is better to employ a government Tatar, his character and credit being at stake for your safe conduct; and if he forfeits these he loses all future employ. These Tatars are generally bulky men; they ride small horses, and with a weight of tackling quite oppressive to the little animals, who shake themselves beneath their load, and run with an ambling pace more like that of a dog than a horse, when out of the gallop.

I should observe that the Tatar is furnished with a "teskeret," or order from the Paasha, to supply him with the required number of horses at the post-houses, an establishment much better

kept up in Turkey than in Persia. This "teskeret" is deemed a necessary protection to the traveller.

The first stage to Gevaslic I deem the scenery to be almost equal to that of Switzerland. The snowy hill-tops were interspersed here and there with the black pine, which, yielding to the blast, scattered its white clothing about in flaky variety; and the mountain torrents, with their impetuous roar, hastened to the sea, impatient seemingly of every interruption. This was to me an anxious day, from the solitariness of the scene, though accompanied by man and beast, and from the difficult passes, where I was obliged to follow more like a bale of goods attached to the saddle than as having any interest in the adventure.

Arrived at our station, the horses fagged, and I somewhat jaded, I was glad to resume my old quarters at Gevaslic, where I had formerly lodged; and on the benches of the coffee-house I established myself for the night, and made it out in tolerable comfort. But the Tatar became jealous of my rest, and at three in the morning we were again in the saddle, having girded ourselves for the warfare of the day. We were soon climbing

the hills again, this being a very mountainous district.

Hence we proceeded to the dreary station of Karakaban, a solitary hut in the mountains, planted for the convenience of post horses. It appeared to me to be misery's head-quarters; and, independent of a fine flow of water, I do not remember any other provision. We were now getting into the mining districts of "Gumish Khaneh," or the "Silver House," with its surface as barren as its bowels were rich, if report spoke true. The town itself was on the side of a hill, seemingly inaccessible; I saw no possibility of approach to it; but on turning the corner, a path had been hewed out through a rock which was strongly fortified. Thus, in many of the Asiatic towns, instead of planting them where good approaches may be obtained, every design indicates mistrust, the fear of treachery, and the dread of arbitrary power.

Threading our way to this most intricate town of Gumish Khaneh, the Tatar housed me in a warm stable, and soon were my senses steeped in forgetfulness, which my restless companion rudely interrupted. To dispute his will would have been to be left alone in the wilderness; so buckling on

my armour, I had nothing for it but to mount again the stirrup of activity.

This district is noted for its good garden ground ; and amongst other produce, the pears are most celebrated. I should say that the village bore rather a healthy hue compared to many others ; there was less of that squalidness and skin-eaten poverty which in Toorkistan is often so conspicuous.

Once in the saddle the Tatar feels inspired again, sets up a wild howl of delight, cracks his whip, and off he sets full speed, the horses seemingly partaking of his inspiration. If you happen to lag behind, then he acts as whipper-in ; you have only to keep the saddle, it is *his* affair to get you on as he would any other merchandise. Many a time was the "surrigec" rolling in the snow. He lays his whip over both man and horse : up they spring and on again, nothing daunted. This is a most spirit-stirring mode of travel, and the animation of a Tatar gallop is perfectly bewitching ; it excites, I may almost say *creates*, faculties unknown before. In going over the boundless plains - the rocky ravines—the more difficult the road, the quicker it must be passed. There were many places where a few inches, right or left, would be fatal to both

man and horse. "Crack" went the whip—and they were passed before I had time to think of danger; and Ferrajulah, looking back at me with that air of satisfaction which imposes confidence, I must confess that I became at length as fearless as himself, and enjoyed the bustling scene.

On arrival at Baiboot, I could scarcely get accommodation even in a stable. They have an inveterate enmity to all Ferengees, since the Russians beat the town about their ears. A large wound in the skull of a mosque, and a leaning minaret of another, perpetuate these injuries to the Moslems. The successive stations of Karogulah and Ash Kaleh were passed with great rapidity. At the latter, numerous streams were gushing down from the mountains, all combining to form that mighty Euphrates, which makes so long a march on the Asiatic soil.

At Elidja, about ten miles from Erzroume, is a fountain of mineral water, surrounded by a low wall; it was then at boiling heat in the centre of the basin. Its properties were celebrated for the cure of rheumatism, though but little used by the natives.

Dashing into the city of Erzroume, almost blinded

with the snow, I was gladdened with the sight of the "lion rampant and the one-horned unicorn" over the British consulate, the hospitable inmate of which gave prompt shelter and food to the weary traveller. The approach to this place, which is the capital of Turkish Armenia, is through the burying grounds, which are uninclosed, and extend a great way, having numerous cupolas, head-stones with gilt turbans, and long inscriptions, for which the Turks are so celebrated in the way of epitaphs.

But the Tatar gallop affords no time to transcribe epitaphs; so arranging for fresh horses and renewing our teskeret, we were soon again in the saddle, and arrived after dark at Hassan Kaleh. I had consoled myself with the expectation of a long night of it in a warm stable, where, man and beast mixed up together, one gets animal warmth where sometimes no other can be obtained. But the impatient Tatar thought otherwise; so girding himself at six o'clock, I had no alternative but to follow his imperious will, though I would have fain escaped from any farther progress that night.

It was bitter cold. The roughness of the way caused many a slip to our steeds, rolling sometimes the Tatar and sometimes the surigee in the snow.

But these are trifles—nothing is permitted to prevent the Tatar's progress—the long whip does every thing for man and beast ; its spirit-stirring influence is irresistible. In these midnight gallops the sound of a dog is most harmonious, as it indicates a village, and possibly rest. About three o'clock in the morning we dashed into Delli Baba, in spite of canine interruptions offered to us at every corner.

Housed in a warm stable, I was asleep in an instant, standing by my horse. But not long did I enjoy this privilege. Ferrajulah shook me to the painful consciousness of being still subject to his arbitrary government. I resisted all I could. "Yawash," Stop! He then indicated that we were in the Koord country, insinuating danger by passing his knife before his throat. This was exciting, so off we galloped.

I was well acquainted with the country, and understood his intention to give me no rest until we arrived at Torprach Kaleh. I did expect to rough it certainly, but this was roughing it in the superlative degree ; so I determined to resist my Tatar, and taking advantage of his advance, I bounded off to the first village I could discover, he after me, shouting and pointing towards this sta-

tion. I got into the stable before him, and having been sixteen hours on horseback, fell immediately asleep.

This was a wretched place called Zadecan, and with difficulty did I get the common supplies of bread and milk, for the former having to wait the baking. This is quite an event in a Turkish village. The oven is sunk in the ground of the common resting place, and heated by dried dung, the ordinary fuel in Turkish villages. The thin pancake dough is then planted against its sides, and it requires but short time to convert it into bread. Sitting around the oven's mouth, I had to wait the operation with hungry impatience, and making out the night on dirty nummeds, I was quite ready at break of day to start for Torprach Kaleh.

Here we breakfasted with the Agha, who was a Koord; indeed the whole neighbourhood may be said to be inhabited by these people, who in their striped "abas," or cloaks, and red woollen caps hanging down the neck, present a grotesque appearance in these wild countries. The horses were small but active, and we dashed through the numerous swamps with wonderful rapidity. Ferra-

julah had no time for accidents, and as we made our first dash through the Euphrates, "Frat," he exclaimed (the Turkish name for this river), and cracking his whip, I had no time to taste of this most ancient of waters.

Diadin, the next station, presents some ruinous fortifications, all crumbling into dust. It was here that I formerly rode over the roof of a house unknowingly ; * but the Tatar now found me better quarters. These government couriers are much respected in these countries — feared, I should say ; a crack of their whip inspires terror.

The wild passes of the mountains, although there was but little time to admire them, were fancifully grand this day. The snow on them was but partial, and the vallies were so rich in pasture varieties, where they were sheltered from the northern blasts, it seemed a struggle, as it were, between summer and winter. I was too much engrossed with the sight to heed my way, and down came my horse, head foremost, but as suddenly started into the gallop by the magic of the Tatar's whip. We got to our station in fine style,

* See page 172.

though I imagined the jaded animals could never reach it.

Two of the Turkish luxuries, in the way of feeding, are "yourt," or sour milk, and "kymack," or clouted cream, both excellent of their kind. They have a minced meat called "dogmah," which is rolled into balls and covered with vine leaves; this is also good. Here, abundantly provided with these provisions, at a good station, messing together with Ferrajulah, we laughed at and with each other, our only mode of intercourse.

There is a sort of satisfaction in accomplishing any object of fatigue or difficulty, and I got so animated by my Tatar gallop as to feel quite impatient to get again into the saddle. A most important comfort to this mode of travelling is the English bridle and saddle, with which I was provided. The Turkish tackling is so very rude as to be almost unusable by a Ferengce.

On the side of a ravine, in a rocky defile, lay a Koordish village of straggling earth pots, as I call them—habitations they can scarcely be named. But, *malgre moi*, here he would take me; and with difficulty did we climb to those dens of misery, amidst the baying of dogs and the vociferations of

a ragged community ; for our arrival had produced quite an *emeute*. The “rysh soofced,” or old agha, led the way to his domicile, from whence issued beings of all sorts—“shame-faced females” included—and seeing a Ferengce come in amongst them, their modest confusion was of the most amusing kind. But they were all ejected together by the government authority, which bears more of the physical than the argumentative character.

Ferrajulah seemed quite at home here ; and spite of my impatience, I had to make out the night amidst all sorts of rubbish. The hut was lit from the top, and there being no chimney, the fire was kindled in the middle of it, in order to the smoke’s escape ; and as this did not always happen, we were visited with sundry portions of it, much to my discomfort.

As to the Koordish cooking, it would puzzle even a Kitchener to imitate it ; and as I lay on my nummed of patience and smoked my pipe of novelty, I was much amused at these scenes of Koordish domesticity. I wondered, too, how the night arrangements were to be made to accommodate so large a family ; looking out for retiring rooms, dormitories, &c., but not any were to be

found; and as the night approached, the family increased. But the sleeping arrangements were soon made; the dirty bolsters and carpets were brought in and stretched promiscuously on the ground, the fire-spot being the most attractive. Here lay master, mistress, and sundry family sprouts, male and female, all of a heap, as accident or cold seemed to draw them together, rather miscellaneously arranged.

Ferrajulah and I kept our distance, for I had found out rather the aristocratic part of the cabin, and he lay at my feet. Koordish somnolency appeared to me to differ very little from that of Frangistan. The old man began the concert, the others followed, about eight in number. This effectually prevented my taking part in it.

About midnight a young woman came in, accompanied by a large dog, and stalked cautiously around to discover seemingly a bare spot to rest upon. I watched their movements by the light of the embers, which threw occasional flaming tints over the scene; but as she approached the aristocratic part of the cabin, I set up such a noise (as if in troubled sleep) that she soon decamped; and being desirous to do the same, I shook myself

at an early hour from my nummed (the Koordish mode of cleansing), and most gladly escaped from my resting-place.

Being detained at Khoie a whole day to obtain horses, I rambled through the bazaars, and saw a good deal of this large city, the gates of which are respectable; but the bridges over the dry ditch are of so tumble-down a description as to be highly dangerous; they are built on slight poles, so as to yield in the middle some six or eight inches of level, and miserably propped with poles from below. There is design in this I imagine. Fancy a contumacious governor within; he cuts down the bridges in five minutes, and defies the outside authority. In Persia every thing indicates stratagem; half the world live by it; no wonder that the art so thrives on the soil, or at the ready wits of the Persians.

The plain of Khoie is most extensive, and richly dotted with villages; but we must not tarry amongst them, being now within two days of Tabreez. There was no time for musings. Ferrajulah became more impatient; the "bakshish," or present, was to depend on his promptitude; and although the ground was occasionally much flooded, where bridges are

unknown or so imperfect as to render them dangerous, we had many a fording difficulty, but they were all surmounted by his activity.

When the old ark or arsenal of Tabreez appeared in view, which may be seen at a great distance, the Tatar raised himself in the stirrups, quite inspired as it were with the prospect. "Tabreez! Tabreez!" Crack goes the whip, the jaded horses take fresh courage, and we very soon attained the goal of our wishes.

I was uncommonly pleased with my recognitions of even the mud walls, and making rapid way over the rotten bridge, was much gratified to hear shouted out, "Sahib ame dast," "the Sahib is come," from an old acquaintance who was making his way to me. As I galloped up to the Khan's, my old abode, and from thence to the doctor's, I was received on all sides with the kindest greetings;—"Koosh amadeed," "Koosh guelden," and so on. Really I began to think that this world is not such a barren spot for human affections as some represent it to be, and I felt a sort of fraternizing amongst my Persian friends, a sort of home-ties; and the domestics coming in, salaaming, kissing my hand, with "Your place has long been empty,"

“ May your shadow increase,” &c. It was altogether a most agreeable termination to my journey. Then the sort of triumph with which Ferrajulah led me in, having performed his bargain, and looking for his “ bakshish.”

I speedily delivered myself, through my interpreter, of the numerous enquiries which I had bottled up on the way—why he stopped at one place, and went on from another; all of which he satisfactorily answered; and I made him happy beyond his expectations.

To give a fillip to nature and a buoyancy to the faculties, I should say there is nothing like a Tatar gallop.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE "TAKHT KAJAR."

THIS palace, which is considered to be one of the Persian "lions," is situated about one fursek, or four miles, from Tehran, under the refreshing mountains of Shemroun, within a large garden enclosed by the usual mud walls. The garden, though formal, is umbrageous and fruitful, and plentifully watered—the great source of all Persian luxuries. The sandy soil which one is obliged to pass from the city, is desperately fatiguing, in a climate at 97 Fahrenheit, in the shade; but the moment you cross the little brook, from whence spring

melons, grapes, and pomegranates, the wilderness smiles as it were, and the rose triumphs over the desert.

The "bauleh kaneh" at the entrance bespoke neglect and decay, two prominent agents under a despotic government, where all private interests are merged in the sovereign. This palace was built by the late King of Persia; and he would occasionally resort to it from the stifling heat of Tehran, accompanied by some of his wives and courtiers. A spacious avenue was intersected by a marble basin, of tolerable workmanship, and some attempt at hydraulic display; but the thirsty lions gaped in drought, seeming to "blow wind and crack their cheeks."

Continuing the line of way, I mounted a terrace so overgrown with intrusive weeds, as to be no longer a bridle-path. Here a dilapidated building bore strong marks of the Persian blight;—there were tanks, waterfalls, &c., all in thirsty decay. The palace, built on a rock at the foot of the mountains, bore every semblance of a prison, evidently fortified against surprise or force,—strongly indicative of Persian jealousy and suspicion; and on thundering at the brass gate, the

hollow responses of the vaulted passages gave me a dreamy recollection of Doubting Castle. I must confess that I had many doubts whether I might commit myself within its precincts. However, as I had nothing to apprehend, and being goaded on by the spur of novelty, I made my way into a large court which led to the baths, all lined with marble. Farther on were the harem apartments; there were likewise other suites of rooms, too numerous to particularise, the whole well supplied with water. At the extremity of the court were two large halls, painted in fresco, with numerous portraits of kings and heroes, magnificently attired in oriental frippery. The *ensemble* gave me any idea but that of a royal residence; there was a muteness over the whole; the actors were all gone; and I never saw any thing so completely desolate, with a sort of chilling blight quite repulsive to the feelings.

I traversed two long dark galleries, which led to the baths already alluded to. Not a voice was heard, not even a "prish kedmet," or head servant, to welcome me with a "bismillah" to this summer palace of the late Shah. I made my way to the Shah's bed-chamber, which is

ascended by a narrow staircase of fifteen steps, with windows opening on the court of the harem and the gardens. Some rude paintings were on the walls, and amongst them was that of a British envoy, but without name or date. From hence, taking my survey of the solitary country, I could scarcely imagine any spot worse chosen for the capital of Persia than that of Tehran; but history informs me that it had been chosen as the seat of government by Agha Mahomed Shah Koja, the uncle of the late King, as being in the immediate territory of his tribe, the Kajars.

Since this Shah occupies so conspicuous a place in the Persian annals, I will pause for a moment to give a few particulars respecting him, as recorded by Sir John Malcolm, in his History of Persia.

“Agha Mahomed Khan was the founder of the Kajar dynasty, the uncle of the late Shah. He waded through seas of blood to reach the throne; and the early part of his reign was distinguished by continual conflicts with the legitimate heir, Jaffier Khan, and his son, Looft Aly Khan, who were at length taken prisoners, and suffered the most horrible barbarities from the usurper, and

with them terminated the Zund family. Of his two brothers, who materially assisted him to the possession of the empire, one of them, of whom he was afraid as a competitor, he ordered his eyes to be scooped out; and the other, Jaffier Kouli Khan, to whom he was more particularly indebted for his musnud, or throne, he decoyed to the capital, on the pretence of giving him the government of Ispahan, where he was barbarously murdered under the portico of a new palace by hired assassins; and some accounts say, in the presence of the late Shah, then called Baba Khan, to whom he said, loading him with abuse, 'It is for you that I have done this; the gallant spirit which animated that body would never have permitted my crown to rest on your head in peace. Persia would have been distracted with internal wars; to avoid these consequences, I have acted with shameful ingratitude, and have sinned deeply against God and man.'"

The blackest hypocrisy was conspicuous in this Shah, and his conscience was scared as with a hot iron. At Kerinan, where the inhabitants had rebelled against him, and sheltered one of his opponents, Lootf Aly, he laid a contribution upon them of so many sacks of eyes. It is said that more than

seven thousand people were thus mutilated to make up the quantity; and they now relate the circumstance in Persia as an undoubted fact, that as the eyes were brought in on trays and thrown on the ground before him, he turned them over with the end of his whip, gloating in his barbarity.

It were endless to narrate all the circumstances of his bloody deeds; nay, they are scarcely known, and they display such a dark map of human depravity, that one shudders at the monster. Building towers of human heads, they say, was nothing uncommon, and one of them now exists at Ispahan.

The Shah was brave as well as cruel; he displayed both these qualities in Georgia, which had revolted during his reign, from dependence on Persia to that of Russia. The inhabitants of Teflis were visited with his fiery vengeance; and in it was committed the usual barbarities of fire and sword, driving thousands of the natives into captivity, binding, and throwing their priests into the river, destroying their churches, wasting their habitations. The Mahomedan historian of this monarch, to convey some idea of the sufferings of the poor inhabitants, says, "that on this glorious occasion, the valiant warriors of Persia gave to the

Georgian unbelievers a specimen of what they were to expect on the day of judgment."

An expedition against Sheshah proved to be the last of Agha Mahomed Shah's military undertakings. Two of his servants quarrelled; their noise disturbed him in his tent, and he immediately ordered them to be put to death. After great entreaties on the part of his grand vizier, Hadji Ibrahim, whom, if any one, he respected, the execution was postponed unto the following morning. The men, rendered desperate by their sentence, which they knew would be carried into effect, determined on destroying the tyrant. Either his days or theirs were numbered; and reckless of consequences, they entered the tent of the King whilst he slept. Alarmed at the noise of destroying the sentinel, which was the work of a moment, the Shah sprang from his couch, and struggled hard for life, promising pardon to his assailants; it is even said that he cut down one of them, rendered desperate by his position; but the other plunged a poinard into his heart, and afterwards cut off his head and displayed it to the troops in the camp. Thus fell, by a deserved fate, certainly the greatest tyrant that Persia had ever nourished

on her soil, and a blot to human nature, such as history, perhaps, in her varied pages, Roman or Grecian, will scarcely again present us with; it was a lust of blood, a wantonness of cruelty insatiable.*

Some are of opinion, that the latter acts of the Shah's life indicated insanity, since he was subject to fits. "Cut out his eyes," was the order of the day for the most trifling offence, which order was immediately obeyed, and the poor wretches had to grope through the remainder of their days in darkness. Such facts are stated to show what absolute power the sovereign possesses in Persia, and what the mind of the man-monster is capable of when loosened to his own unbridled passions. I am not more astonished at the conception of his sanguinary decrees, than I am at the execution of them; that a nation should be so awed by one individual as to massacre each other at his dictation.

The Shah, when uninfluenced by those passions, kept up in his court a royal sway of kingly dignity.

* The tyrant has been admirably depicted by Mr. Morier in his "Zhorab," or the Hostage. I have never seen any illustrations of Persia so graphic, so correct, and, at the same time, so ludicrous, as of this talented writer, in his "Hay Baba." The Persians say of this Shah that he never retired to rest satisfied without having murdered one of his subjects.

of which he was very tenacious; at such times he occupied himself in acquiring contributions to his coffers, when he did not like to exact them by force. He was strongly tinctured with avarice, that prominent blight of the Persian character, and many facts illustrative of this are related by Sir John Malcolm, to whom I refer enquirers whom they may interest; limiting myself to one anecdote.

The King was passionately fond of hunting; and disappointed one day at not bringing down a stag which he shot at, he became vexed and irascible. A peasant soon passed by with a deer on his shoulders. "Oh!" cried the King, "that man has killed my game—cut off his ears." The poor peasant, who came from quite another direction, and was ignorant of his Majesty's disappointment, protested against this operation; but his ears were bared to the knife by the faroshes. "Softly," said he; "take but a slice from each ear, and I will give you all the money in my pocket"—which was four rials (six shillings). The offer aroused the King, who overheard him. "What does he say?" It was repeated. "I will make a better bargain with you," said the King; "give me the money, and the whole of your ears shall be preserved."

I continued my way, frequently questioning my guide about what I saw, of which he was quite as well informed as myself. The walls were adorned in the oriental style, with stained glass, Koran inscriptions, and royal poetry, all in fine characters; the ceilings were good, and the doors of exquisite workmanship, inlaid with ivory, ebony, mother-of-pearl, and other ornaments. I need scarcely say, that the building was all of mud—"nothing like mud" in Persia; and as I traversed again the lonely halls below, a chilly feeling came over me, which caused me hastily to depart. I had taken an extensive view of the surrounding country; the sandy map below me bespoke sterility and drought; but here and there, where the bubbling fountain sprung in the vale, it was beautifully dotted with villages. They are numerous in this district of Shemroun, and their luxuriant foliage, amidst the wild oases of the deserts, is a great relief to the monotonous tedium of Persian scenery.

The Takht Kajar, although deemed to be one of the best country palaces near Tehran, was but seldom visited by the late Shah; there was a

quietude in his general habits of life, which rendered him contented with but few changes; and when those of climate became necessary, he would generally go to camp on the plains of Sultiniab; or even near Tehran these changes were easily attainable. It is astonishing at what short distances great variations of the thermometer occur, of from twenty to thirty degrees.

I arrived at the gate of this garden in the month of August, at six o'clock in the morning, cooling at every pore, and I found within it the freshness of spring. Descending the terrace below, which was divided by a dry canal, a farther descent, by a covered staircase, led to a second and third terrace, at the bottom of which was a small building, likewise ornamented with paintings, frescoes, &c., the view from which was very pretty. The garden was gained by another descent, which I traversed again and again. I snuffed up its sweets amidst a thicket of flowers. It was crowded with fruit trees, and at this season so laden, as to satiate all appetite. The walls were lofty, having four gates, each of them with a small room over, all in rapid decay.

CHAPTER XIX.

TABREEZ.

IN describing any one Persian city, the description will apply generally to others, allowing for differences of the scite and dimensions. The mode of building, or rather of burrowing under the ground, is general in Persia. The soil which they excavate is moulded into walls—mud upon mud—with flat roofs, the whole baked into a uniform substance, so strong as to resist cannon balls.

I had had a long midnight march from Marand, with one attendant only, Bucktrari Ali, who was to conduct me for the first time into Persia. No means of communication existed between us beyond that of signs. Wearied and sleepy, I was nearly

dropping from my horse, when Ali sung out "Tabreez." In vain did I look out for any thing resembling the busy haunts of men. A large brick elevation, called the "ark," or arsenal, was the most prominent object in view. This was surrounded by small mounds of mud, as they appeared to me, about ten or twelve feet above the surface.

On entering the gate, which was ornamented with coloured tiles, I found myself in a narrow drain-way, as it appeared to me, a line of irregular walls on each side, with occasional small doors, leading to what I imagined to be dog kennels, or some such respectable abodes. A khanaut, or stream of water, was partially opened, partially covered; herds of dogs were on the walls, disputing almost our passage, and remains of others lying in the way, the putrescence of which was emitting a most offensive smell. Drove of donkeys laden with brush wood were disputing the narrow way, driving me up against the walls, and the ups and downs of the rubbish, which had been allowed to accumulate into hillocks, required no little care to surmount them. Of human dwellings, or what appeared to be such, I saw none, not a window, nor a sign of habitancy beyond the straggling passers-by, some

in sheep-skin coats, badly slippered, but well armed, through which I had to make my way.

I now became incredulous as to the faithfulness of my guide; which Ali seeming to perceive, still cried out "Tabreez;" and so it proved indeed to be. I soon found my friends, enjoying the sight of a tank of water leading to their dwellings. Descending some eight or ten feet into an enclosed court, the said dwelling was very respectable for an Asiatic soil, having only the ground floor, the roof being on a level with the street.

I was still for a long time incredulous as to my being actually in the once renowned city of Tauris, of which Chardin gives so glowing a description; I still thought I had been cheated into a suburb, to give me the more agreeable surprise at seeing the original city. But so it really was; and my oriental dream about "the land of the sun, the garden of the East, the air scented like musk," was at once dissipated, especially as regarded the latter point, for my olfactory nerves were greeted by nothing but the odour of decaying dead dogs!

Subsequent experience and residence gave me more intimate acquaintance with this oriental city, the boundaries of which I grew well acquainted

with, from my almost daily walk around the scalloped mud walls, which are nearly three miles in circumference, and have seven gates. These walls are double, having a wide dry ditch between, and the inner ones are flanked by towers, at irregular distances, on which sentinels are planted, and also at the different gates. The keys are nightly sent to the governor or beglerbeg of the city, and without his special permission they cannot be opened until the accustomed morning hour; it is very difficult to obtain ingress or egress out of the appointed time, as I more than once experienced.

The bridges over the dry ditches of which I have spoken, are built of and upon long poles, slanting in the middle, sometimes with large holes here and there, where the leg of a horse or a mule has damaged the building, threatening to do the like by the leg of the horse or mule in return. So frail are the bridges, and so positively dangerous, that I scarcely ever passed one without expecting it would break under me. As to the scarp and counter-scarp, the bastions, curtains, and the rest of the fortifications, they appeared to me to be very respectable—sufficiently so, I fancied, to satisfy even my uncle Toby himself.

The ruins of the two mosques, of Mesjid Ali, and the Sultan Kazan, I have already alluded to : they were upset in the great earthquake of 1559. These are the most prominent features in the way of ruins. The great Mans House is distinguished by a respectable looking door-way of brick.

The plain on, or rather *in* which the city stands is very extensive and barren ; the boundaries, southern and northern, being high, rugged looking mountains, inaccessible seemingly to man and beast, and quite denuded of vegetation ; and the plains bear but very partial spots here and there of garden ground. As to any thing like "chummum," or meadow, I do not recollect a patch of green herbage.

The "hummums," or baths, are numerous, but not very good. As I lay on my mat the first morning of my sojourning at Tabreez, a most discordant din greeted my ears ; amongst other sounds, that of the "hummumchee," proclaiming with the cow's horn that the bath was ready for all comers. This was at the break of day. The muzzins were singing out the Azan, or call to prayers ; there were the "katergis," or muleteers, braying after a stray donkey, whilst forming their

caravans, &c. Such a medley of strange sounds gave me a marvellous impression of my new residence, particularly after the smart shock of an earthquake the preceding evening.

The bazaar is a long line of buildings for shops, partly roofed in, partly covered with mats and other frail materials, all of the tumble-down decaying description. The Persians, by these frail tenements, seem to imply that there is no to-morrow for them—every thing is to serve the present moment. This long line of shops extends through the heart of the city, and becomes the thoroughfare to its different portions. Men and animals pressing against each other through a narrow road of about eight feet wide, and pushed against the walls by a donkey laden with fruit or brushwood, it is quite a struggle to get on. The noisy “Kebardar,” ‘take care,’ at the angles where the thronging generally takes place; the dervish, singing out in the name of Ali, rattling his kettle, his tall figure towering over the rest, clothed in sheep or deers’ skin, with his felted conical cap, ornamented with inscriptions from the Koran; all these form a *melange*, of which it is difficult to give a graphic description. There is sometimes the moolah on

horseback, with many followers, on his way to the Mesjid, and he meets with general respect. The road is cleared for this "father of the faithful."

The shops are of the most miscellaneous kind, though in some parts the trades are placed together. Here is the "kiabobshee," or cook, roasting his little sausages on skewers, whilst the passer by is eating these favourite dainties at the door, dipping them in "moss," or sour milk. The "dellok," or barber, is seen shaving the dirty skull of an Hummual. Close by, it may be, is seen a funeral, with the hasty tread of the bearers of the corpse, which is placed on a bier, in a striped wrapper.

Here are also the shops where they sell "guzangabeen," or manna, described to me as produced by a small insect, resembling a white thread, on the leaves of trees. From this honey is made, by being mixed with flower and water. The product is the most indigestible of all food, ycleped "manna." The Persians are very fond of sweetmeats; at most visits they are brought round as refreshments.

Nothing can be imagined more grotesque than this miscellaneous congregating in the bazaars;

the busy hum of the men of pelf, the various displays of Georgian and European manufactures, the Damascus blades, the numerous fire-arms, caps * and slippers, saddles and nummeds; the various trampers with their sweetmeats, ices, cakes, and sherberts, chaunting their invites to the passing world; then the bubbling noise of the "kaleeon," or water-pipe, and the fragrant emissions of the long tchibook—for with all their occupations this is never forgotten—the scene must be witnessed to be appreciated.

There are openings here and there from the bazaars, which lead to the caravansaras where the merchants deposit their goods. Some of them are very respectable buildings, having subterranean stabling for the horses, and "bauleh kanehs" or sleeping rooms over the shops. There was one lately built, the entire property of a merchant, which must have cost I imagine one hundred thousand tomauns; and another was in progress,

* The Astrucan black lambskin cap is the universal head-dress in Persia, from the prince to the peasant. It was first introduced by the Kajar tribe. To obtain them in small shining curls, which is their great excellence, they kill the ewe before her yearning, and the lamb is taken from her prematurely. Thence arise the glossy black hue which is their great beauty.

with its magnificent dome built without any centre, already alluded to.

Beyond these were workshops for the manufacture of fire-arms, brought to very respectable perfection by one of the Persian youths sent to England to acquaint himself with the art. So ingeniously had he copied a rifle of one of the London makers, that I was completely taken in by it. He had engraved the name in steel letters, and, Persian like, had sold some of them as "London guns." This he related to me with great glee, quite unabashed. "Real London," said he, "although made at Tebreez."

The sabres also were pretty good, though not equal to those of Ispahan or Damascus, either for the excellency of the material, or for the delicacy of the workmanship. A good Ispahan blade, if well welded, will, it is said, cut through a half-inch bar of iron, a bale of cotton, or a silk handkerchief thrown into the air; and this is by no means a Persian extravaganza. The Persians are great admirers of these missals, and nothing is so acceptable in the way of "peishcash," or present, as a double-barrel Joe or a pair of hair triggers.

The other manufactures cannot be said to flourish

much. Despotic governments are adverse to all improvements; for if profit be derived from them, they are sure to be taxed, and genius can never flourish where the invention meets no protection, and may be even attended with danger. The Persian who succeeds in amassing wealth unknown to the government, seeks posthumous fame by the building of caravanseries or baths, but quite unconnected with any patriotic feeling, or even for the good of mankind. The most prominent of the arts, and the one in which they so much excel, is that of enamelling; in which, in point of rich fancy of pattern and of execution, they exceed the Europeans. The exquisitely formed flower grows on the gold and silver "kalleons" and thimbles with a grace most true to nature. Of jewellery I do not recollect much display in the bazaars beyond that of the "feruzas" or tourquoises, of which the Persians are very proud; some stones being valued as high as one hundred tomauns. The most celebrated mine is at Nishapore, in Khorassan. There are others, but they yield a stone of a very inferior quality.

The merchants may be deemed the most opulent and the most independent class in Persia.

'They are lightly taxed by the government, and less interfered with than others; and are so alive to their own interests, that they take care not to excite the cupidity of their rulers by any ostentatious display of wealth. Sordidness and avarice are their general characteristics—with a good deal of low cunning and caution; and so thirsty are they after gain, so over-reaching, and so shrewd in their dealings, that not a son of Israel can live amongst them. I believe I may say that Tabreez is the only city I was ever in without meeting with a Jew. I heard of a few only at Tehran, though the tribes abound amongst the Turks, where they thrive most flourishingly.

The merchants seal their bargains with their signet instead of with their signature; and the authenticity of these, and the being bound by them, depends entirely upon the seal. Hence the office of the seal cutter is one of great importance and trust; for if he is known to make duplicates, his life would answer for the offence. The date must be cut on the seal. They are all registered, and if a seal be lost, public notice is given of it by the merchant to all his dealers. They engrave beautifully, indeed with a perfection unknown to Europe.

They abbreviate the Feringee names by leaving out the vowels, whether in contempt or compliment, I do not know.

The Aji river, a salt, muddy stream, runs through the city; but the general supply of water is good, and by means of "khanauts" it is brought from the neighbouring mountains, at considerable distance. The narrow ways or streets leading to the different habitations are positively dangerous in time of frost, or an accumulation of mud in the wet season. Occasionally a wall tumbles down, or a "khanaut" must be opened, which prevents all possible thoroughfare; and what with the ups and downs over rubbish and into water-holes, it is quite a scientific affair to get through the streets of Tabreez.

The obscure door-ways lead down by steps, or by an inclined plane, to the courts within; and it is an agreeable surprise sometimes to enter the spacious court, with its tank of water in the centre, or its well-planted garden, and to find so respectable a dwelling within. There are always two distinct courts; one of them leading to the harem, or forbidden apartments.

The simulation of the Persians amuses me much.

It is exactly the reverse of that of Ferengstan; they assume poverty, squalidness, and every other guise, as security against oppression and spoliation; whilst the Ferengees often assume wealth and importance to impose on the credulous, and to live on their credit for a time, until the trickery leads them to a gaol, or sometimes to an alms-house. You never hear of the Persians failing in business, or by extravagance falling into decay. Is not the prudence of the Persian more to be desired than the extravagance of the European?

Tabreez is situate at the foot of the Mount Orontes, in an extensive plain; it is the capital of Azerbijan, or country of the Ghebres, or fire worshippers, and was the ancient Media. It has been frequently conquered by the Turks, and their language continues to be the current one of the day. Abbas the Great, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, expelled the invaders, and permanently established the Persian rule in this province. Chardin visited it in 1672, when, from his report, it contained two hundred and forty mosques, fifteen thousand houses, fifteen thousand shops or bazaars, three hundred caravanseries, and more than half a million of inhabitants, with splendid squares,

piazzas, &c., which proclaimed it the second city in the empire. Its ancient name was Tauris, when under the Medes; but the Persians gave it the name of Tabreez in the year of the Hegira 165.

A most destructive earthquake about a century ago toppled down the greater part of this magnificent city, and is said to have entombed a hundred thousand of its inhabitants, leaving the wreck and ruins which I have partly described. Of inhabitants the present city may boast of about sixty thousand.

I found the hummums or baths in Persia very inferior to those at Smyrna or Constantinople. At the former place they were my frequent resort, and a slight description of what I found them, will apply to oriental baths generally.

Groping my way through the dark and intricate bazaars, I at length reached the scene of cleansing operations. It was a large domed building, very respectable in appearance, with steam issuing from it enough to drive a railway train. The scene on entering was most amusing; all sorts of people denuding themselves on the well stuffed benches, provided with carpets and coverings of various kinds. This was in the outer room, where, being reduced to my original state, I sat down amongst

the other *naturels*, their head gear and slippers scattered about in all directions—turbans, shawls, &c. When I speak of *turbans*, I do not mean as belonging to Musselmans, since no infidels would be allowed to pollute their baths with their unclean presence. This was a Greek bath. The Greeks wear a sort of rolled kerchief on the head, over the “fez,” or red scull-cap; but as to discriminating the caste of company, who could tell of what nation they were! since Nature makes no distinction, from the monarch to the peasant, all kinds being clothed in her buff livery. It is for fantastic man to assume the purple, and other habiliments, down to that of the convict.

Here I was refreshed with coffee and pipes. Every thing in these countries is to be preceded by smoking. After some time, the hummumchee arrived from the other room, a hideous looking wretch, walking upon high wooden pattens; and as he took hold of me, I receded from his rough touch, as though he was going to scald a pig. Following him to the next room, which I will call the preparatory boiler, the steam overpowered me with a sort of paralysing effect. I had been hot enough before, but this was intended to open the

pores, and make them more facile to the shampooing operation. To retreat was impossible, so after remaining a short time, he led the way to the grand washing room, a large octagon building, very lofty, and lit from above, the echoes of its occupants playing round the roof with most amusing continuity. It appeared to me to have been originally a church, the small adjoining chapels being converted to reservoirs, steam-houses, wash-places, &c. If I found the atmosphere of the last room paralysing, how shall I describe this?

Presently my savage looking conductor laid me down on the marble slab. Resistance was useless, and I was too powerless to impede his operations, as he turned me over like a lump of breathless clay, and began to scrub unmercifully with a sort of hair-cloth glove. This he lays on to his utmost strength on the muscles and sinews, causing them to give up all their impurities. This shampooing is a curious sensation; he kneads you about with his knuckles, cracks your bones, and you feel unhinged in every part.

I writhed and sung out under the operation, much to the amusement of the operator, and this

continued for half an hour, when I was taken to one of the wash-houses, well lathered with soap, and drowned in hot water. Never was I so completely purified since the days of my swaddling clothes; and the refreshment is most luxurious, when reposing at lazy length on the benches of the outer apartment, you are clothed in soft wrappers, and coffee and pipes are again introduced to restore the inner man.

When once the operation is over, the bath is certainly a great luxury, and conducive to health; as regards the digestive powers, I found them to be wonderfully pacified by these operations. The noise from the many being shampooed at the same time was most overwhelming. There were nearly a dozen nudities running about, adding to the concert; and as the domed apartment resounded with their cries, I could neither distinguish character nor country of those being operated upon. There was a babel of sounds in this outer room, of almost all oriental languages, and the scene was very amusing.

All respectable persons are supposed to get a good washing once a week at least. They are very fashionable places of female resort. Parties

of females will spend a whole day together on this pastime.

The only natural hot bath which I have seen in Turkey is at Elidja, a small village near Erzroume.* Here the water was in the boiling state, the ground being at the time covered with snow. It was surrounded with a low mud wall, about twenty feet square. I had no opportunity of analysing the water, and whether or not it possessed mineral qualities seemed to be quite indifferent to the natives, men or cattle.

There was a similar natural bath at Teflis, in Georgia, having good buildings over it, with the necessary accommodations; and here I bathed. This is decidedly of a mineral quality, and is much resorted to by the natives under sundry maladies.

Frequent ablutions are enjoined by the Mahomedan religion, and you will scarcely find a town or village without a good supply of the hummums.

In the ruins of the Mesjid Sultan Kazan, which was built by Shah Shem Ghuzan more than six hundred years ago, are some magnificent slabs of the Tabreez marble, with which the remaining

* This bath I have already alluded to, see Chapter XVII.

walls are lined. It is of a transparent yellow colour, formed by the deposition of waters from a spring which forces its way out from the body of the cliffs; and near the village of Shirameen is the spring of chalybeate water, which, running into ponds, stagnates. A strong mineral smell proceeds from it.

The process of petrefaction is some two or three years going on, and its different stages are to be traced. At first the water appears clear, as it stagnates it becomes black, and lastly, it has the appearance of being frosted. On breaking the outer coat, before the operation is complete, it has the look of an accumulated layer of papers of different colours, with which the marble is grained—of red, green, and copper-colour, most richly streaked. It is brittle and transparent, so much so, that it is sometimes used for the windows of baths, or other buildings requiring light without outward observation. It is found perfectly consolidated some three or four feet below the surface. It was formerly exclusively used for the Shah's service, or only by special firman, to be obtained by any one else; but latterly it has been sold to the best bidders. It is used to decorate mosques and palaces; sometimes also for tablets, on which I have seen the

exquisite engravings at the tombs, so well done by the Persians. The slabs may be obtained of almost any dimensions. Those which I saw in the Mesjid were some of them twenty feet in length, and about ten feet in breadth, most beautifully polished.

The climate of Tabreez is the most salubrious I have met with in Persia. Although the scorching heat of the sun has even tried old Indians, to whom it was almost insupportable, yet there is a refreshing midday breeze, which tempers its intensity. The cold is so severe in the winter, that to sit by a large fire clothed in furs is by no means uncommon. I have never felt it so intense, except in Russia. Care must be taken to avoid the extremes in both as much as possible; a *coup de soleil* is not uncommon, with most frightful consequences; and to dig out frozen corpses from the snow occurred during my being there.

There is a class of the wandering tribes of Egypt which come almost every season, and encamp in the neighbourhood of Tabreez—

" Hard faring race—loud when they beg,
Dumb only when they steal."

They are prowling thieves for the time, and are detested by the Persians. The native men-

dicants are but few in Persia. Alms-giving is a most prominent trait in the Mahomedan character; total want, much less starvation, can never occur amongst them.

Tabreez is sometimes visited with the awful cholera; it devastated the city in the year 1830, and is said to have carried off between thirty and forty thousand people. The plague, too, has sometimes made great havoc at Tabreez, though from all my enquiries I do not find that it has ever raged so destructively as in Turkey. I have been assured that a remedy has been found for this "child of Nemesis." My informant was a military gentleman, long resident in Siberia, where he saw the cure effected. A bullock was slain, the patient stripped, and in complete nudity was wrapped in the warm skin of the animal, from whence he received new life, and gave up disease. How long he remained so attired I know not, but his recovery was said to be complete.

CHAPTER XX.

CARAVAN TRAVELLING.

THE caravan is an assemblage of merchants and travellers congregating together for mutual protection; for there is always a certain degree of danger when going over the Turkish and Persian soil, which arises from that restless and untamable nomadic population, called Koords, who inhabit the frontiers of those countries,—despising all authority, governed by none. During my stay at Erzroume, they were flying about in all directions, taking advantage of an unarmed population, and almost to the gates of the city, committing their depredations.* Thirty travellers had just pre-

* It was formerly the custom of the Pasha of this city, on capturing any number of Koords, to send up their heads, salted, in sacks, to Constantinople, to be laid at the gate of the seraglio.

sented themselves, plundered and stripped to the skin.

There being, at length, ready about a hundred and fifty people, we formed our caravan, of the most motley group, both of man and beast, that was perhaps ever assembled. I was the only European amongst them, and consequently an object of the vacant stare of the muleteers, who always afford me much amusement. The leading camel, preceded by a donkey, was adorned with much frippery of coloured beads and bits of glass about the head and ears, the knees, and saddle housings, &c. Of this the "chaoush," or leader of the caravan, is very proud; and as it moves on at funereal pace, there is plenty of time to smoke the pipe of reflection, whilst the sound of the camel bells are sonorously issuing from the ravines. The train sometimes occupies half a mile in length; the day's travel being determined either by the pasture to be found for the cattle, which is free to all comers if it be summer, or to the village supply of provender, if in the winter. As to the travellers' accommodation, that is the last thing thought of, and to sleep with your horse is the general order of the day. I never slept better than in a

warm stable, amidst curry-comb music and clouds of dust. There is generally a small raised platform at one end of it, with a chimney, and this is "the traveller's rest." Then for provisions, bread, milk, and eggs are generally to be found; and the "muff-rush," or wallet, ought to contain rice, coffee, sugar, tobacco, &c., or one must go without them. The incidents are rather monotonous—the loading and unloading—mending the packsaddle—bivouacking—the sundry fires for cooking the pilau—the night arrangements. The muleteers have a busy time of it, catching every momentary interval for their favourite tchibook.

At Delli-Baba we fell in with the Turkish troops, and such a rank and file I suppose was never marched to Coventry—bare-legged, badly-shod, armed and unarmed. (I should observe that at this time, the Russians were invading the Turkish territory, which made it very difficult for a Ferengée stranger to pass on). The moment they saw me, "Ruski" was sounded out, and all the village was in alarm, dogs included, and I was immediately surrounded by rank and file. They thought I was "spying out the nakedness of the land," and nothing was more probable amongst the

ignoramuses, who knew not English from "Ruski;" in fact, they have but one term for all Europeans—Feringee. What was to be done? I sat quietly on my horse, laughing both with and at them. They eyed and pulled me about to see if I was of the same species with themselves, grinning through their leathern countenances at having made of me "lawful prize."

In the mean time the village divan was summoned, the Agha, or chief, presided, and the colonel of the troops was one of the leading members. I never could find out whether I was tried judicially or court-martially. My friend, the Khan, was amongst them, urging and arguing for my release, and threatening them with his high displeasure, in case they detained me. How that displeasure was to have been expressed I never heard, since we were only five or six of us against a whole village, and rank and file I do not know how many.

I was at length called in, and astonished to find myself of such importance, making quite a noise in the Turkish world. The divan was assembled in a hot stable, with air holes here and there to emit Turkish effluvia, which was of a very varied

quality, including tobacco smoke. I had therefore some difficulty to discover how many were the gentlemen of the jury; I think there must have been fifty squatting down on the straw and dung, amongst whom I came in with all possible *nonchalance*, throwing my whip about, as much as to say, "who dares to affront me."

I squatted myself near to the Agha, and laughed to the Khan, and said, "What is going on?—I'll not remain here any longer." "Stop," said he, "no such hurry;" and then explained, what I was before ignorant of—my being taken for a "Rusky" spy. Most fertile in expedients, I never saw him daunted by difficulties, and after adopting a variety of arguments to endeavour to persuade them to the contrary, he hit upon it that I was an Elchee, carrying important dispatches into Persia. This gave quite a new turn to the affair, for the name of Elchee is always respected amongst this people.

It was somewhat surprising to me to find myself travelling in the diplomatic line; and though I could not quite understand it, yet the Turks certainly did; and then, as if wanting to confirm this statement, they asked, "what was the news con-

tained in my dispatches." This was a poser even to the fertile Khan; however, he recovered himself, and said, "it was as much as his head was worth to communicate their contents, but that they were of great importance." I was then immediately established in their high consideration; the tide of contempt had turned into the tide of respect. The Agha took his pipe from his mouth and offered it to me, which is the pledge of friendship. I had nothing for it but to put it to my mouth, which I thought was paying dear enough for his friendship. Had I declined doing so, it would have been a declaration of war. The members of the divan seeing this, immediately moved off, and I, with all possible official importance, made my way through the crowded villagers; one held my stirrup, another my bridle-rein, and I galloped off with the Khan to overtake the caravan, which had preceded us.

At another village we found an assemblage of similar troops, and we went to pay our respects to the colonel, whom we found in a stable, smoking, and giving his orders to a numerous train of bare-legged soldiers surrounding the door. He was very polite. The Khan put him in good humour

by saying the "Ruskis were fast going to Jehannum," at which he laughed, crying out "Mashallah." He ordered a stable to be cleaned out for us, and came to pay us a visit, being anxious, it appeared, for another gazette. We received him amidst curry-comb and horse-dust. I established myself in the manger, which was rather capacious; the colonel smoked with us one or two pipes, and then took his leave. The pipe-bearer is a most important personage, and is first on the staff, in preference, I imagine, to the adjutant-general.

Leaving the stable odours at three o'clock the next morning, we went to rejoin the caravan, which had gathered on its way to about double the original complement of men and beasts, there being, I should think, three hundred of each, the latter comprising camels, mules, donkeys, and buffaloes. There were muleteers, camelteers, merchants, and travellers, and I the only Ferengéc amongst them, issuing out of the dell with most amusing confusion. One silver star lit up the scene, and that which of all things surprises an ignorant people, the "star shoots," were most

numerous,* as we passed a rocky bed on which the stream was pouring down in foaming haste; men and cattle, almost in the dark, groping about in various detachments—the muleteers hallooing, the camel bells ringing, and sending their long echoes through the valleys.

The scene was so perfectly original, and the incidents so amusing, that it requires a much more graphic pen than mine to bring them to light. When the “eye-lids of the morning” were opened, and “Nature had put off her night clothes,” the interest of the scene was much increased; there was the heavy laden ass rolling down the steep, load and all, into the stream below; while the horse, disengaging himself from his burden, was making off to the delights of freedom.

It was an amusing sight to witness the long train of the caravan clambering over the hills for more

* The falling stars, or meteors, are considered by the Persians to be the blows of angels on the heads of devils who would pry into Paradise. The fall of the angels in heaven they attribute to their being informed of God's intention to create man after his own image, and to dignify human nature by Christ's assuming it. Some of them thinking their glory to be eclipsed, envied man's happiness, and so revolted.

than a mile in length,—the muleteers sounding out their discordant notes, the noise of which was enough, I thought, to frighten the camels. They are a patient, joyous sort of people, these muleteers, though but little removed from the cattle, in their food or attire;—they eat barley as well as the horse, they sleep in the same stable with the horse, their jacket is of the roughest possible cloth, their feet tied up in bags with rope sandals; and yet withal they are cheerful and happy; only give them a pipe of tobacco, and they will kiss the hem of your garment.

Under the mountains of Debar we bivouacked. The cattle were turned adrift to find their own food. Our hammock was formed by bales of goods, piled around as a sort of protection from the wandering donkeys. Here our carpets were spread, and the various groups, with about twenty fires burning on the ground, black camelteers, with their white turbans, swarthy looking Persians, all occupied in cooking their pilau, tying up their sandals, or mending the pack-saddles:—it was a very busy scene, and strictly oriental. I fancied at first that I should have no sleep, as on laying down I saw only “the spacious firmament on

high," splendidly lit up with "Nature's brilliants;" but I soon found out that

"————— Weariness

Can snore upon the flint, when restless sloth
Finds the down pillow hard."

The next morning we progressed toward Toprach Kaleb; when in view of the fort, a gun was fired to announce horsemen in the distance.

I have had much experience in caravan travelling, having spent countless hours in this pastime. On looking over my Journal, I find myself on the mountains of Teches, the celebrated pass of the "ten thousand." The ascent had been long and steep; the loaded cattle climbed the hills with great difficulty, and we had passed through forests of the rhododendron, with here and there the most beautiful sloping lawns, lit up by a brilliant sun, which contrasted with the dark foliage of the fir and the brown beech skirting the hill-tops. It was indeed a bright page of wild uncultivated nature. The rhododendron fed the bees whose honey poisoned the Greeks; and I understand that the flower of this plant is equally noxious.

Historic recollections now crowded upon me as I reached the place where Xenophon and his fol-

lowers first saw the sea, the object which could alone pacify a grumbling soldiery after their long and disastrous retreat. The spot was beautiful. As I gave a parting glance at the sea,—here, thought I, stood Xenophon, with his immortal band, in sight of the goal of his toils and dangers, the relation of which by the historian is so animating! What must then the reality have been? I stood on the very rock from whence the sea first gladdened his longing eyes. There can be no doubt of its identity; geography never changes in this country; it is called “the mountain of the ten thousand.” It was a very narrow pass, scarcely to be deemed a bridle-path—I speak of the very summit—with mountain boundaries of fanciful shapes, here and there clothed with snow. There was a sort of gloomy majesty in the solitary grandeur, disturbed only by the towering eagles, many of which I saw of an enormous size.

I love these ups and downs in the world; they are pleasanter to me than the smooth path. Nor does this apply to travelling *merely*; there were many objects of interest in this spot, independent of nature’s grandeur. On a towering peak on our left stood some remains of a Genoese castle, famed

as the rendezvous of the crusaders, who were led on by Peter the Hermit. I was interested in tracing fragments mixed up with the history of the times of Cœur de Lion. A German *savant*, Dr. Schultz, an *employé* of the French government, whose acquaintance I had made at Constantinople, scaled many of the walls of these ruins, and copied inscriptions. Most of the characters, as he told me, were "arrow headed:" he made many valuable discoveries.* I had no time to devote to moulder-

* The name of Schultz demands from me a momentary tribute to his memory. To collect antiquities in the east, and to make researches in the Oriental languages, he was sent out by the French government. Travelling difficulties assailed him from the first, in consequence of the then existing war between Persia and Russia. from Erzeroum he was driven back by the plague; at Teflis he was detained six months by fever, and at length he reached Iabriz in June 1829, after three years' journeyings to and fro, and I was the first to welcome him to that city. In the following October he set out for Roumin, which is partly inhabited by the Nussuramees, a sect of the Nestorian Christians of the most ancient race, and possessing many books and writings very interesting to an antiquary, it is partly inhabited by Koords also, but neither of them owe allegiance to Turks nor Persians. The chief of the Koords at Djulamenek is the descendant of the ancient Caliphs of Bagdad, and pretends a claim to the throne of Turkey. These people live contentedly in their own country, which is almost inaccessible. They are very jealous of any one coming amongst them, particularly Franks: this was at a moment too when the Russians were extending their conquests near to this

columns—the caravan never waits for antiquaries; by me the dust which buried them was not rubbed off. There is nothing surprises the Turks so much as to see the Ferengée climbing old walls, turning up grave-stones, and ripping open, as it were, the womb of gone-by time. What does *he* know about antiquities! who has no idea of any age beyond that of his grandfather, and is as well acquainted with Alexander the Great as with Alexander the coppersmith.

country. Dr. Schultz, contrary to the advice of all his friends, would go to the town of Djulamenek; he was very well received, and treated with much hospitality by the chief, who appointed him an escort to return, intimating that the roads were dangerous. On arriving at the confines of their territory, he was shot in the back by his own escort, and, with some of his people, died on the spot, another made his escape to Tabreez with the melancholy intelligence, where it created great sensation. The Prince declared that he would take vengeance on the barbarians, but I never heard that he did so. The poor doctor was much esteemed by all who knew him, possessing as he did such a fund of closet and worldly knowledge. Ardent in his pursuit of antiquities, neither mountains nor ravines checked him, and he would climb a time-worn pillar with all the energy of a Syntax, to decypher a motto, or to copy a hieroglyphic. I trust that his papers have been preserved, and that the public may yet be gratified by the publication of his interesting researches. Amongst them was a specimen of the Koordish Gospels, in the translation of which Bishop Schevrit, at Roumia, was also engaged, as well as the Acts and Epistles in Koordish.

In a little nook of friendly shelter, we sat down to discuss our breakfast, not amounting even to "a salad and an egg," as Cowper says, but a few nuts, some apples, and a morsel of bread—our thirst slaked from a neighbouring brook. What matters it, so that the chinks are filled up and nature satisfied!

At one place we were attended by a guard of Turks, where the defile was considered dangerous. Our bare-legged cohort looked very fierce, carrying short clumsy guns, which occasionally, in those rocky passes where banditti might possibly lurk, they would discharge, the reverberating sounds from which echo took up, and sent from rock to rock with amusing continuity. We had from fifteen to twenty of them scattered through the caravan; and as I never failed to be an object of interest amongst them, I cultivated their acquaintance as well as I could by some little presents in the way of tobacco, and had always one or two at my side, chaunting away their wild notes, and looking upon me, I thought, more as a hostage than a free traveller. I have some lurking partiality for this wilderness life; though I know nothing about crowds and etiquette in what is called "the great

world." Give me the greater world, whose canopy
is heaven—whose bounds are boundless !

" Are not the mountains, waves and skies
A part of me, and of my soul, as I of them ?
Is not the love of these deep in my heart,
With a pure passion ? ——"

I will here add a few miscellaneous recollections from my journal. I find myself at Avajek, the frontier station between Persia and Turkey. There is always danger at this pass from the Koords, who are hovering about in all directions. Being quite alone on this occasion, I brought a letter of acquaintance to the Khan of the village, who could neither speak nor write Persian. I should observe that since the Turkish invasion of Persia, their language has never been withdrawn from it ; on the contrary, in the whole of ancient Media it is the most generally spoken. The Meerza soon arrived, who was eyes and tongue to the Khan, and I was taken into favour, a stable cleared out for me, and such supplies ordered in as the humble village would afford.

My demand for escort was granted, and amounted to some fifteen men ; these were fierce looking mountaineers, being Koords, and as they were

drilled in before me, for my approval, I was struck with their grotesque appearance; they were well armed, and seemed fully prepared, as I thought, for any sort of prey that might offer—even those whom they were appointed to convoy, in case there was no other. However, it will not do to mistrust those whose protection you seek; so marshalling my little band, I took the centre, assuming all possible importance, and thus we dashed off for the mountains.

The wild features of this rocky district it is rather difficult to depict; they were not exactly those which I have previously described, but had a sort of savage hue repulsive to man and beast. Here the bandit finds his hiding-place, here the wild Koord, "his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him," wages war against his fellows; and slowly surmounting the towering passes, you expect a surprise every moment, of that uncourteous kind which the strong make against the feeble, the armed upon the defenceless. I kept my eye steadily fixed upon my guards; one of them I strongly suspected, who had a stubby beard,—which to me is indicative of a bad soil. On arriving at a difficult ravine, he fired a gun, which

was answered by a party below ; helter-skelter off they ran —and I was left alone, like a partridge on the mountains.

I am just now at the bottom of the Koflan Khu, already spoken of as dividing Irak Adjemi from ancient Media. After a precipitate descent, having to cross a crumbling bridge over the muddy river of the Kizzil-ozzan, our way lay through some rich pasturage, and finally by a fine beaten road to the village of Arkand. Here was a good menzil or post-house, the water was abundant, and this was a promise of every thing else in the way of provisions. It was at this village formerly that an ambassador met with so rough a reception, and was actually beaten out of it with all his party ; the villagers not only refused them supplies, but kept them off by force of arms. The Persian custom has always been for the foreign ambassadors and distinguished strangers to travel with a "sadir," or order from the Shah, to furnish him and his suite with forage, and all other necessities on the road, addressed to the different Khans and Ketkodehs of the villages through which they may pass, such travellers being attended by a "mehmandar," or

conductor, bearing this *sadir*, and whose duty it is to procure the supplies, and to pass them on their journey. These *mehmandars* are so very arbitrary and oppressive, that they drive the poor villagers sometimes into rebellion, even against majesty's order. They not only levy the requisites, but so much beyond it, that they make a large profit of their journey;—such a temptation to plunder is almost irresistible to the Persians. How far this *mehmandar* had been known to the villagers I cannot say, but they mounted the roofs of their houses well armed, and absolutely kept him at bay and all his suite, and the insult thus shown to the ambassador, the Persian government had not the power to redress. Fine promises were made of extirpating these “sons of burnt fathers,” but nothing was done—the usual mode of settlement in this country.

This village showed dreadful waste, caused by plague a year or two before; it appeared to contain more ruins than tenements; the crumbling walls were becoming “dust to dust,” and gaunt-eyed Desolation seemed to have driven her ploughshare through it. The remaining villagers were cheerful, for there is great elasticity in the Persian character.

The caravanseries in Persia are of a very miscellaneous description. Some of them have been built and endowed by private persons, for the Persians are very ambitious of posthumous fame; and their desire of acquiring this leads them to build caravanseries, which are consecrated to hospitality and a refuge for the stranger—some of them heavy, massive buildings, put together seemingly to defy time. The most respectable which I have yet seen is near the Sibley Pass, said to have been built by Shah Abbas, who was famous for his public works in Persia, particularly for the great causeway which runs from Keskar,' at the south-west corner of the Caspian, to Asterabad, a distance of more than three hundred English miles. This caravansery was of brick-work, massive in the extreme, and the arches of that beautiful symmetry which so characterises Persian masonry. It was of an immense extent; I lost myself in its intricacies; and very dark, being lit only by air-holes here and there, which admitted but little light. At the door the smith was making shoes for all comers, and he seemed to have plenty to do. The keeper of this huge-looking prison, who expects a small fee, has generally a room fitted up for himself, and he waits upon travellers.

Water was abundant here. I do not recollect finding any thing else at this Traveller's Rest. At Sershem there were some remains only, but of great original extent and good architecture. I climbed the walls, hoping to find some nook within them habitable, if it was only for a breakfast; but withering Desolation had so completely made it her own, that it was strictly inhospitable to man or beast. Persia offers many other similar remains by the road-side, intended to shelter the houseless, and as earnest of that hospitality enjoined by the Koran; such buildings having, in most cases, been erected at the expense of some good Musselman. The caravanseries within the towns are of a superior description to these. I have described the one at Kazvine, where I lay for ten days; there was another at Zenjen, not so good, but habitable. But the Turkish caravanseries are still worse. I have met with them on the most desolate places, at Orlessa, &c. a ruin of mud, not a human habitation near them, nor a being to welcome you, not even a cat. I was infected with the feeling of desolation, and could exclaim with the Persian poet, "What is the world but a caravan-sery, where each man occupies his chamber for a season?"

CHAPTER XXI.

THE "EDE Y NU ROOZ."

Who can determine that knotty point as to what season of the year "the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Even our immortal bard admits "for man to tell how human life began, is hard." The Persians contend for the 21st of March, the feast of the vernal equinox, and the anniversary of the elevation of Ali to the Caliphat. Their year of twelve months contains each thirty days; they add to them five complimentary days for the common year, and six for the bissextile. Hence their great veneration for New Year's day. This festival was formerly observed by the fire worshippers, and it is the only one which has

survived the days of the Ghebres among the Mahomedans.

The Persian writers say that "God on this day began the creation, and ordered the different planets to move in their respective orbits." No specific season being revealed to us in the Mosaic account of "the beginning," some writers say that even Adam himself kept the "Nu Rooz" on the 21st of March; they say also that on this day Noah descended from the ark, therefore they call it "the feast of the waters."

I am quite disposed to think that this is the proper day for the "Nu Rooz." It is the first of the spring season, the winter being over, and Nature evidently rejoicing in her regeneration. It appears to me to be a much more rational observance of the new year's festival than the gloomy season chosen by the Europeans. * Adam describes it with "each tree loaden with fairest fruit," and when "all things smiled." This is

* The new year was so observed in England, viz., on the 25th March, then called "the old or Julian mode of computation," until the year 1752, at which period Gregory I reformed the calendar, whereby the year was calculated from the 1st January, when an Act of Parliament was passed to adopt the Gregorian calendar in England.

evidently the season when Nature renews her strength; the teeming earth bursts with her vegetable produce, the feathered choristers chaunt their hallelujahs to the God of all creation, and even animal life quickens.

I have much enjoyed this day in Persia, but in the drizzly, frigid climate which we inhabit I question if the sensations of delight can be so lively as under the animating rays of an oriental sun. Such is the power of the animal over the mental system, that the Persian (the Frenchman of the East) knows nothing of that torpidity and langour of the brain so peculiar to "the Englishman of the West."

The "Ede y nu Rooz" is distinguished by a series of fêtes, which continue nearly a week. Chardin's description of them applies to the present day—that it is one of the grandest of the Persian festivals, when, from the prince to the peasant, all must be happy, or appear to be so. The relations of life are renewed (if I may so say) by family ties, friendly ties, and numerous other ties, known only at this time. Then the sequestered haremite comes off her carpet, and bedizened in the costly trappings conferred by her lord,

exchanges courtesies with other splendid prisoners, all happy in that seeming vacuity of existence, which may be likened more to animal than to spiritual life, kissing and embracing each other, with their "Ede y shuma mobarek"—"May the festival be propitious to you!" Even the men express their congratulations in the same manner. All seem inspired with the sensations of our first parents—"With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed."

The servants are clothed in their new liveries; business is partially suspended; nothing whatever is done by the government authorities for three days at least. The bazaars are deserted, and one general surrender to the dissipation of idle visits seems to pervade all classes.

These visits are very amusing, until they become tiresome with the overflowing bowls of flattery administered from one to the other, the "chum y chum," or compliments, so liberally dealt out, the sending and receiving the "peiscush," or presents. This latter is the most important part of the ceremony; for with all their external civilities, each person expects to receive more than he gives; and here is a fine scope for intrigues amongst the ser-

vants, who profit by these exchanges. I like this custom of their *souvenirs* to each other, though not the motive which actuates them. Such little courtesies enhance somewhat "the poetry of life," taking off the edges of its "dull realities"—the former so little known, and the latter so predominant, in my native country, whose people are so noted by foreigners for their frigidity.

. The King on this day holds his court, attended by the numerous "shah zadehs," or princes of his family—a score or two—as many as can conveniently leave their respective governments. Then the Khans, the ministers, the foreign ambassadors (if any at the time are at the capital) all wait on the "Shah Padi Shah," "the Centre of the Universe, the Cousin of the Sun and Moon," for permission "to rub their foreheads at the gate of almighty splendour." From a large vase filled with gold and silver coins the royal bounty is scattered to his favourite sons and courtiers, but is intended to produce abundant interest, since they are baits of invitation merely to the liberality of his subjects.

Voluntary taxation was the only source of revenue in Persia until the time of Darius, who first imposed other tribute. Hence he is called "Darius

the merchant." It was in his reign that money was first coined in Persia, called "Darics." It now forms, perhaps, a third of the ordinary revenues; and although Persian politeness both gives and takes it as voluntary offerings, yet I understand that no exactions can be more severe. His Majesty obtains full information of the revenues of his different Khans and ministers, and expects from them their due proportions. In order to continue to bask in the royal favour, or to maintain their governments, an emulation is excited amongst them to excel each other in their "Nu Rooz" offerings. The niggard is displaced, and the liberal tramples him down; the royal squeeze must be followed by the governors squeezing the poor "ryots" or peasantry. Through these different sluices all comes to the royal coffer at last.

The Shah's splendour on these grand occasions has been described to me as perhaps the most gorgeous display in the world. The immense riches of the crown jewels would buy a kingdom; on his "musnud" or throne, he seems made up of diamonds, pearls, and all the sparkling stones of the world. No subject in Persia is allowed to wear jewels; not even the Shah's sons. It may be al-

most said, therefore, that all the costly treasures of Persia are heaped upon his Majesty.

Numerous fêtes succeed each other during the seven days that the festival lasts. The first of these, however, is the most important.

Beyond the small gold and silver coins with which his Majesty deigns to honour his subjects, he presents to the most distinguished, or the most liberal, "kalaats," or dresses of honour. These are generally of shawls of different qualities and value. The bestowing of these dresses is a very ancient usage in Persia, and is one of the many biblical customs which may still be traced in this country. Thus was Mordecai honoured by Haman at the King's command, and Jonathan to show his love to David, "stripped himself of the robe that was upon him and gave it to David." So also in the days of King Solomon: "And they brought every man his presents; vessels of silver, vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses and mules, a rate year by year."*

His Majesty's bounty in this respect was said to amount to nearly a thousand "kalaats" annually, not one of which cost him any thing, since he

* 1 Kings x. 25

makes requisitions on the towns of Kerman and other districts to supply the necessary shawls for that purpose.

“The object of the world’s regard” being seated on his throne, the observance of ceremonies and court etiquette is said to be the strictest in the world; the least deviation from it would be deemed almost criminal. The princes, courtiers, &c., who approach in erect position with their hands crossed, watch the royal looks; his glance is a command, his frown may be death; and should they be addressed by the Shah, such is the fearful respect entertained for him, you scarcely hear their reply.

Such forms and ceremonies are deemed essential not only to the glory but to the power of the sovereign, and the least deviation from them would be deemed insubordination to his government, and visited with immediate punishment. Of these court ceremonies we have a very interesting report from Sir John Malcolm, in his own presentation to the late Shah of Persia.

“The arrival of a foreign embassy is one of those occasions in which the King of Persia should appear in all his grandeur. The foreign minister advances with his suite and escort to one of the

interior gates of the palace ; the moment he reaches the precincts of the royal abode, all is complete silence—the horses even, as if trained to the scene, scarcely move their heads. When announced, he is conducted into a small apartment, where he is met by one of the principal officers of government ; after being seated there some minutes, the King is announced to be on the throne, and the ambassador proceeds to the hall of audience. From the throne to the entrance of the garden, the princes, ministers, courtiers, and royal guards, are arranged in their respective ranks ; but the splendid appearance of the officers is eclipsed in a moment when the eye glances at the sovereign, whose throne and dress are covered with the richest jewels. As the ambassador advances between two officers, whose gold enamelled wands are the insignia of their high station, he is twice required to make an obeisance. When near the throne, the lord of requests pronounces his name, and that of the ruler by whom he is sent. The King says in reply, “ You are welcome,” and the foreign minister proceeds to take his seat in the same room, but at some distance from the King. If the ambassador has any presents to offer, they

are (however rich) received without any appearance of gratification, for the most extraordinary work of art must not appear to excite surprise, nor to fix the attention of the monarch when they are publicly presented: the forms of his condition require that he should conceal any joy or wonder till he can indulge in it without restriction."

Not having attended the ceremonies of the "Ede y nu Rooz" at Tehran, I will briefly borrow from those who have, on the occasion of a foreign ambassador being presented. "The ambassador and his suite entered into the court where the King gives his solemn audiences, conducted by the master of the ceremonies. This court, or rather garden, is called the 'Gulistan,' or rose bed. It is a parallelogram, of about three hundred paces long, by one hundred and fifty wide, shaded with beautiful plane trees, and planted with roses, jessamine, and all kinds of flowers. An oblong basin divides it into two equal parts; several little fountains rise in the centre, and its borders were covered with fruits and refreshments, in gold and silver dishes, and in vases of China porcelain. The nobles were standing ranged and in silence, at distances more or less near the throne, according

to their rank; the 'shah zadehs,' or princes, were also standing, and placed according to their ages.

"When we had made three profound bows, we were requested to take places below those princes, and the King then invited the ambassador to approach him, when the latter advanced into the hall near his throne. This hall is at the end of the garden, and almost on a level with the ground; it is lined all over with looking glasses, gildings, and Persian paintings. The King wore a tiara sparkling with diamonds, and was surrounded with all the attributes of royalty. His Majesty was seated on a pedestal of white marble, enriched with gold, and supported behind by a cushion, embroidered with fine pearls; he wore bracelets of precious stones, in the midst of which shone the 'derai nowr,' or sea of light, one of the largest diamonds known; he smoked from a 'kaleoon,' shining with emeralds and rubies; the principal officers of his household, ranged round the throne, pompously displayed all the court jewels, in gold and silver gilt dishes.

"I confess I had never seen a more magnificent spectacle. It was the first time we could contemplate one of the most powerful monarchs of Asia

in his glory, and it was no longer possible to doubt of those immense riches of which the Persians so often spoke to us. There is not the least exaggeration in the account I give you of this imposing ceremony. Add the brilliancy of a beautiful day, and that of the sun's rays at noon reflected in a thousand ways from this prodigious heap of gold, silver, and jewels, and you will still have but a faint idea of what we saw on this occasion.

“ The ambassador having pronounced a short address, which was translated into Persian, the master of the ceremonies came forward to fill his hands with new pieces of gold and silver money, according to an ancient custom practised at this court. Its object is to remind the receiver that the King is the sole dispenser of the wealth of his kingdom, and that he distributes or withdraws it at his pleasure. This is, in fact, the real triumph of despotism.

“ We were next served with ice sherbet. The ceremony was concluded by a long oration, addressed to the King by his chief moolah; the most extravagant praises and hyperboles, which are the common flowers of the oriental style, were not spared, so that his Majesty, if fond of incense

received a large supply, and might enjoy it at his leisure.

“ Six days after, the ambassador and all the legation were again invited by the King to the festival at which the governors of provinces present their ‘*peiscush*,’ or voluntary tributes. This ceremony takes place in the first court of the royal palace. The governor of Khorassan was the first who presented himself; he bowed profoundly before the King, his father, and presented fifty superb horses of his province, an equal number of mules and camels, Cachemere shawls, several bags of tourquoises, &c. The latter objects were on broad wooden trays, carried by the officers of his household. After these presents had passed before the King, they were sent into the interior of the palace. The governor of Kerman sent his offering by his vizier; it consisted of Cachemere shawls; arms, such as lances, muskets, pistols; and a great number of camels laden with carpets and fine felts. The vizier of the governor of Mazanderan then presented in the name of his master more Cachemere shawls, stuffs of gold, silver, and silk, wooden spoons of delicate workmanship, arms, camels, and mules. Those of the governor of Farestan were

also remarkable in their kind; amongst other objects we saw a great quantity of sugar and syrups, mules and camels laden with coffee and tumbako, or smoking tobacco, from Shirauz.

“But the tribute of the beglerbeg of Ispahan surpassed all the former in magnificence. Besides superb Turkoman horses and rich stuffs, it also included that precious metal so eagerly sought by all mankind, and for which the King of Persia is said to have a decided predilection. Fifty mules, ornamented with Cachemere shawls and streamers, carried each one thousand tomanus in money, a sum equal to about £45,000.

“Every year at this season these presents are received, and by this an idea may be formed of the immense riches which the private treasures of the King of Persia must contain. Games of all kinds succeeded to the presentations of the tributes, which were sent into the King's palace as they passed in review before his Majesty. These consisted of men running on stilts; others performing feats of strength and balancing, turning on the slack rope, or carrying on their heads a pile of earthen pots, surmounted with a vase of flowers; then dancing, and combats of rams that were ex-

cited against each other. These exercises were followed by rope dancing, performed by young children; these dancers are called in Persian, 'djanbaz,' meaning him who plays, or risks his soul. This expression, contemptuous in itself, intimates that games of this kind are discouraged by religion, and is nearly synonymous with that of excommunication.

"Naked men armed with maces, and wrestlers, appeared before the King. The first resembled savages; they struck their clubs together, but without injuring each other. It was not so with the second: their combats have something so revolting and hideous that I am loth to mention it. The conqueror, that is to say, he who succeeded in throwing his adversary on his back, went to the foot of the 'kiosk' to receive a piece of money, which the King threw down to him.

"The King retired for half an hour to say his evening prayer, and then returned for the fireworks: they extended over all the great court of the palace, which is three hundred paces long and five hundred broad, also on some of the terraces that surrounded. They commenced with the Bengal flames, which had a very fine effect; then they

let off in confusion a prodigious quantity of cases of crackers and rockets. Suns, figures of men and animals, trees and houses of fire, every instant presented new scenes, and there was nothing wanting but more order and symmetry, to render the spectacle magnificent.

“The next day was appropriated to horse-racing. At six o'clock in the morning we left the city to proceed unto the plain of Tehran, where the King's tent had previously been pitched. Futtee Ali Shah soon appeared; he was in a military dress, and accompanied by several of his sons. The march was opened with “zambrooks,” being small cannons carried on camels, and by four elephants ornamented with red trimmings, and carrying towers or pavillions, gilded and lined with looking-glasses. When the King alighted to enter his tent, a general discharge of the “zambrooks” was fired, and horsemen, magnificently dressed and armed in the antique style, started into the midst of the area, to perform a species of tournament until the races should begin. The horses admitted to the competition had departed the day before; some of them had to run a space of three farseks (fifteen miles) in an hour and a half; others one

fursek in half an hour. Prizes were reserved for the winners; the first amounting to one hundred tomauns, the second to fifty, the third to ten. The horses were rode by children, dressed merely in a shirt, pantaloons, and a handkerchief on their heads. According as they reached the winning-post, the names of the persons to whom they belonged were proclaimed. The King's horses gained, as they ought, the first prize.

“ After the race, the Shah was seated on his throne, covered with gold and silver enamelled; a vase of flowers ornamented each of the arms of his seat. He wore a tikmé of blue velvet embroidered with fine pearls, and a cap of Astracan lambskin. The interior of the tent was lined with stuffs of gold and silver; there were several mirrors in it, a rich cushion embroidered with pearls, and a portrait of a female in embroidery. The princes, ranged in a line before the King according to age, were leaning on large bows, and had leaden quivers on their shoulders; the richness of their dresses, and their bracelets sparkling with precious stones, produced a very imposing effect, which was heightened by the brilliancy of a beautiful day. Below these princes stood two officers of the palace, one

of whom carried the mace, and the other the large shield of the King, both enriched with emeralds and rubies.

“To show the expertness of one of the young princes, of seven or eight years’ old, the Shah ordered him to shoot several arrows at an object he pointed out to him; the young prince obeyed, and discharged a score of them at the running footmen ranged in a file before the elephants. Though his strength did not allow him to reach them, the attitude and looks of the servants did not the less betray fear and inquietude; at each arrow they were seen bowing the head, then raising and lowering it again; but from respect to the King, none of them attempted to quit his place. This amusement, though savouring rather too much of the practical joke, was at length terminated. We afterwards separated from his Majesty, who soon remounted his horse to return to the palace. Thus ended this festival.”

CHAPTER XXII.

A B B A S M E E R Z A.

I HAD once the honour to be invited to wait on his late Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Persia. "Surely," said I, "my face shall be whitened, and my consequence increased, now that I am to bask in the sunshine of royalty!" So mounting the stirrup of impatience, and being goaded with the spur of novelty, I bounded off with my friend and interpreter the Khan, and made my way to the "dhur khaneh," or palace gate.

All visits in the East must be made on horseback, be the distance ever so short; * and when a

* It is customary to precede it with a present. I was honoured with a kalaat by the Prince, which was taken from me by the Koords.

Khan goes out, he is attended by his "peesh waz," or road clearer; one man bears his pipe, another his slippers, the third his "baula poosh," and so on. His dignity much depends on the number of his servants, to be increased by the running footmen, as many as you can muster, one at each rein, and the remaining "ambulants" bringing up the rear. Pick them up by the way, no matter who, so that you arrive at the "dhur khaneh" heavily attended. I have seen the "beglerbeg," or mayor of the town, arrive with nearly a hundred followers, of every class and description. He would set out with some twenty or thirty, increasing as he went on; and as to any thing like livery, bare legs, sheep-skins, and slippers, came the nearest to uniformity—I speak of the "accumulated extraordinaries." His own servants, particularly the "peish kedmets," or body men, are well dressed, the Persians being very vain in this respect.

Arrived at the "maidan," or large square in front of the Prince's palace, I saw nothing externally to indicate the residence of royalty, except some small display of tile engravings over the door, and some congregated masses of all sorts of people, humbly waiting the fiat of the Naib ul

Sultanat, which might possibly affect their tongues, or even their heads. The plain brick arched vestibule, without even a coat of mortar, led to a long passage of the same material, the ups and downs of which were such as, without due care, might cost one a bone's dislocation. This conducted to an enclosed court, filled with applicants and implorants, waiting to reach the threshold of justice.

In a small ante-room, well carpeted, we had to wait for some time, until the ceremonial of our introduction was ready. There I sat upon "the carpet of patience, and smoked the pipe of expectation," until at length the "yassawal," or master of the ceremonies, arrived to say that the Prince was ready to grant us audience. We had then to cross the garden to the inner apartments, where the Prince was sitting. It was a plain looking building, with windows almost to the ground. The "deewan khaneh," in which he receives people on state occasions, was richly carpeted, and nummeds, or long narrow carpets, were laid on each side, for the visitors to range themselves according to their rank, which is indicated by the stations which they occupy on the nummed.

Within this room was his "khelwat," or small closet, as it appeared to me, in which was the Prince, sitting in an English chair.

Keeping on my hat, and doffing my slippers, I accompanied the Khan, who on entering made his "serferoo," or obeisance, and I, of course, did the same; then we approached a few steps, bowed again; and having arrived within about six feet of his Royal Highness, made serferoo the last, more profound, with all the humility which I could assume. The Khan was afraid I should laugh out, for after sundry previous practisings, he found me a very unapt scholar; however, I behaved pretty well.

The Prince said, "Kushamadeed,"—"you are welcome—your place has long been empty. I was very desirous to see you;" and then with rapid utterance, not at all waiting for my rejoinders, with which I was well charged, and wanted to deliver myself of, he enquired my name, of my travels, how I liked Persia, talked so rapidly, and introduced such extraordinary sundries, that I had great difficulty to find pause for my maiden speech, which was ready cut and dried—the practice, I believe, of all maiden speeches.





At length I said, through my interpreter, that I had heard much of his Royal Highness's name in my own country, for the condescension and courteous urbanity with which he had been pleased to receive English visitors at Tabreez, particularly our missionary Martin, by whom it was noted in his journal;—how highly honoured I felt, “who was less than the least,” at this proof of his Royal Highness's condescension. “Barikallah,” said the Prince, and at intervals, “Laullah e ilullah!” “there is no God but God!” but what this had to do with my audience, I could never understand. His Royal Highness went on with a long string of talk, enquiring if I could speak Persian, &c.

The “chum y chum,” or compliments, being over, the Prince said that he had great respect for the English nation, having received warm friendship from them, which he should never forget. He added, “the Persians and English are one,”—which is deemed a great compliment in Persia, and however I might have ventured to differ in opinion, of course I durst not express it.

Amongst other subjects, his Royal Highness alluded to the late war with Russia, saying, that

the real events of this war were never known to the English nation, and referred to an article of the treaty, No. 15, which had not been observed by the Russians. Having talked politics for some time longer, when his Royal Highness signified his pleasure that we might retire; so salaaming it backward three times, with "May his Royal Highness's condescension never be less," I resumed my slippers and retreated with the Khan, with every deferential respect.

Having already spoken of Abbas Meerza, I will only add of this princely person, that he was about forty years' old; rather above the ordinary stature, of an originally very fine form and countenance, with dark penetrating eyes, full of intelligence, though clouded a little, I thought, by the cares of state;—but sufficient were the remains of his former self to say that he must have been a fine specimen of the Kajars. His manners were easy, and his whole appearance dignified; his dress was unostentatious, his robes of cashmere shawl, trimmed with silver, his "kanjar," or knife, sparkling with brilliants, but having on his head simply the black Astracan cap. He had been

governor of the province of Azerbaijan for twenty years, and was renowned for his clemency, and for his attention to the duties of his high office; often would he sit in public to hear the complaints of his people, and nothing grieved him so much as to exercise by punishment that authority which was absolutely necessary for the safety of the community.

The people over whom he presided, appeared to be a very quiet industrious race, and apparently quite happy in their mud regions, as I saw them issuing out of the gates morning and evening to their numerous villages, their donkeys generally laden, and themselves bearing a load of napkin bread under their arms. I heard of no crime nor commotion amongst them; they seemed blessed with a sort of negative enjoyment; and of the Persian peasant it may be truly said, "To be content's his natural desire."

I subsequently took more time to examine the grand hall of audience, the walls of which were ornamented with Persian paintings, some of them descriptive of the last war with Turkey, of which his Royal Highness was the leader, and distinguished himself much by his bravery. There were

other pieces, representing the Prince at the chase, of which he was very fond. In one of them he is lancing the wild boar. I have already spoken of the arts in this country, such as I saw at Sulimania, and at the Bagy Seffre, my remarks tending to show that they have no notion of perspective. Their taste for sculpture is no better. A statue of a female was once introduced to the Prince, an exquisite specimen of Sievier's chiselling; but the work had no charms for Abbas Meerza. On being told the cost in England, how his Highness laughed! "I can buy the most exquisite form in flesh and blood for half the money," said he, and he would give her no place in his "harem khanch."

So desirous was the Prince to cultivate friendship with the English nation, that he invited British emigrants to reside in his country, to introduce their arts and industry amongst his own people.*

This invitation was so scantily promulgated that it failed to attract emigrants to Persia, where fifty thousand, in his province alone, might have located amidst the greatest abundance. The soil was prodigal of fruits of the finest kinds: grapes, apricots, peaches, of more than European qualities. Of the

* See Appendix

former, the "kiss miss," or stoneless grape, is very delicious. There were also melons in great quantities, both the musk and water-melon. Latterly, some vegetables were introduced by the English, such as carrots, potatoes, onions, &c., but these will never come into general use by the Persians, who eat nothing in this way but rice. I should observe that their prejudice against the unclean beast, the hog, is equal to that of the Jews. Scarcely will a Persian servant cook a ham, much less partake of it.

It was remarkable that the Prince, who had never been beyond his own country, and was brought up to the most rigid tenets of his faith, should have been so liberal a Mahomedan. He had no idea of converting people to the Prophet's creed; on the contrary, he had the most contemptuous opinion of those who from interested motives would embrace Islamism. On a parade day the moolahs came forward, congratulating the Prince on their having converted an infidel to the true faith. He enquired what were the man's motives. Was he acquainted with the doctrines which Mahomet taught, and did he adopt them from

conviction? On being answered that he knew nothing of the Koran, the Prince immediately said, "Then he must have had some interested motive in doing so;"—which he heartily despised, and ordered his pay to be reduced twenty to-mauns; he being then in the military service. As might have been expected, the renegade renegaded again to his former position.

When Mr. Missionary Wolfe was in Persia, the Prince received him very graciously, and promised him protection and encouragement in building schools, saying very good-humouredly that some of his sons should become his first scholars. He granted him a large plot of ground and the building upon it, to show his sincere desire to serve the Christian cause. He addressed a letter to Mr. Wolfe, of which the following is a copy, as given to me by my good friend, late the Prince's physician:—

"The Rev. Joseph Wolfe having been presented to us, has explained the desire and wish he entertains of establishing in our city of Tabreez, and under the patronage of Henry Drummond, Esq., a school for the education of all classes, and of

sending from England such teachers as may be necessary to reside here, and to employ themselves constantly in the instruction of children. As this benevolent undertaking is in perfect accordance with our feelings, and as the strictest intimacy now exists between the governments of England and Persia, the proposal of Mr. Wolfe has met with our cordial approbation. We have, therefore, ordered that a house should be given, in order to inspire confident assurance that when teachers come from England, the institution shall always receive from us all due patronage, protection, and support."

Subsequently, neither Mr. Wolfe nor his patron did any thing in the way of establishing these schools; which left rather an unfavourable impression on the Prince's mind, since it had the appearance of trifling with him.

The gallantry of the Prince has been conspicuous, in the double sense of the word; it was the cause of his last war with the Turks in 1822. A large and distinguished party of Persians, including the royal harem, were making the pilgrimage to Mecca, and had to pass through Erzroume, where they were suspected of having merchandize with them which was subject to go-

vernment dues.* Remonstrances were of no avail; they were told, "This is the royal harem, if you profane it with a gaze, dire will be the consequences." The Turks persevered in visiting it; and the women were subjected to insults. The gallantry of the Prince being thus impeached, he immediately declared war. An army was assembled of thirty-five thousand men, and his Highness took the field and made rapid marches towards Erzroume. He took possession on the way of Torprach Kaleh, where he defeated four Pashas with nearly sixty thousand men—so says the Persian Gazette. He then advanced to Hassan Kaleh, where he displayed great courage and generalship in conducting the war, which lasted only a short time. The Turks were glad to compromise the affair by a peace, which the Prince liberally granted them. The great superiority of the Persian to the Turkish troops was then very clearly established.

The Prince's family was very numerous. Some of the "shah zadehs" were married during my stay at Tabreez. The marriage fête is generally

* The Persians had frequently imposed on the Turks in this way, by associating merchants in their diplomatic trains, or under other cover of government protection, thereby cheating the "gumrook," or custom dues.

announced by fireworks, rockets, and other missiles being thrown into the air. Of the marriage ceremony I can say nothing, since I was not present at one.

The Prince's predilections in favour of every thing English were particularly fostered by his great regard both for his "hakeem bashi," Dr. Cormick, and for the generalissimo of his troops, Major Hart; to the latter of whom was committed the training of the "serbozes," or infantry, who, by means of English discipline, formed a very respectable corps.*

Abbas Meerza's military genius was latterly exercised against the Khorassanees. He had made

* I would here pause to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of Major Hart. In June, 1830, he was carried off after only a few hours' illness (and within ten minutes of the death of Sir John Macdonald Kennier), of gout in the stomach. His remains lie interred in the Armenian church. Scarcely any Englishman has resided in Persia who has obtained so much the respect and love of the people. His name was quite a passport to the traveller. In his military duties, although a strict disciplinarian, he was much beloved by the Persian soldiers. The Prince's regard for him was unbounded, and he shed tears at his decease, lamenting the loss of his commander-in-chief as the greatest misfortune that could have happened to him. Frank, generous, and brave, he was an ornament to the English character. Trained to arms from the earliest age, he had seen twenty-eight years of uninterrupted service, and more than twenty of it

one or two campaigns in Khorassan, and had assembled a pretty large army at Meshed. During my stay at Tehran, the Prince had come up to solicit supplies from the Shah, for the purpose of marching against Herat, leaving his son, Mahmoud Meerza (the present Shah), commander-in-chief of the troops. He was then in a very enfeebled state of health. Dr. Cormick did his utmost to dissuade him from another campaign, alleging the probable consequences to be totally destructive to him. Jealous of his honour, having pledged himself to return, and ambitious of military renown, the Naib ul Sultanat departed on his military expedition. But he never lived to reach Meshed; being carried off by the climate fever at a village on the road. The following is my report from Tabreez of the melancholy event:—

in Persia. He was looking forward to retire to his native country from the toils of military life, but death suddenly interposed, and both Prince and people were the sincere mourners over his tomb. It was gratifying to see an Englishman so highly respected by a Mahomedan Prince, and by his talent and conduct holding up the honour and dignity of his country. He was equally respected by the Shah, in proof of which, during my stay at Tabreez, he sent him the money to pay the troops in Azerbajan, which he would not entrust to Abbas Meerza, having more confidence in the honour of a British major, than in that of his own son!

"On the 11th of October, 1833, we received the distressing intelligence of the death of Abbas Meerza, made public by the Ameer y Nizam to the young princes and to the people of the town. The scene was dreadful; the whole town flocked to the Prince's 'maidan' in deep mourning, black tapers burning in their hands, and in the other ashes or straw, strewing on their faces and heads, with true feelings of lament and sorrow.* The young princes rushed out from the 'deewan khaneh' with their faces and clothes covered with mud and ashes, and mourned with the public, which was really affecting beyond description. The mourning is to be kept up for seven days, and the Shah has ordered it to be general throughout Persia."

Thus died prematurely, at the age of forty-three, Iran's hope, England's friend, and the most accomplished Mahomedan prince to be found in the annals of that country. How many of the actors on the Persian stage have I seen go down to

* How much do the usages of Persia remind me of Biblical customs. Here we see Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, the friends of Job, lamenting over his calamities "They rent every man his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven."

the "tomb of all the Capulets!" The Colonel (Macdonald Kennier), the Major (Hart), the Prince, the Doctor,* and last of all—"the King of Kings."

* Dr. John Cormick had been in Persia for more than twenty years. He held the high appointment of "hakeem bashi," or chief physician, to the Prince, by whom he was much esteemed. It may be said that he was one of the connecting links of the friendship which the Prince entertained for this country. Summoned by his Royal Highness to Tehran, to accompany him to Khorassan, he for a long time resisted the invitation, and much against his will was he at length prevailed on to follow the Prince, some days after him, on that journey. Being ill at the time, he was but little fitted for the undertaking, having suffered from typhus fever some seven or eight days previous to his arrival at the village of Maugany, twelve stages from Tehran (this was on the 28th of October, 1833). Here his attendants, observing in his countenance a sudden change for the worse, became alarmed, and in a few minutes they found him speechless, and in the last struggle of death. His body was the next day interred somewhere near the village, but it was subsequently brought up to Tabreez, and buried in a garden, called "Marian Nauna." On my last visit I went to his tomb; a plain inscription narrated his name, age, and time of decease. The flowers were growing around it in profusion, and the birds were enrolling their requiems over the deceased. His memory is much cherished by all who knew him.

END OF VOL. I.



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REMINISCENCES
OF A THREE YEARS'
RESIDENCE IN PERSIA.

CHAPTER I.

FUTTEE ALI SHAH.

THE late King of Persia is most gracefully introduced on the canvass of history by Mr. Morier, in his "Zhorab." I will fancy him seated on his "musnud" of royalty, bearing his "jika" of monarchy, and girded with the imperial girdle of despotism; which took place in October, 1798. The young prince was at Shiraz at the time of his uncle's death, from whence he was summoned by the Grand Vizier, Hadji Ibrahim, who took instant measures for his succession to the throne.

Whether the many striking instances of the

precarious fortunes of the princes of Persia—that devastating waste of life and eyes which had marked the reign of Agha Mahomed Shah—had harrowed the young prince's mind, or whether by nature he was endowed with a merciful disposition, which was his general characteristic, suffice it, that the quiet tenor of his reign was marked with the mildest despotism, of thirty-five years' duration; during which very long period (for Persia) order generally prevailed. Civilization followed in the train, and prosperity threw her broad mantle over Iran's thirsty soil, which had been before so stained with blood, so convulsed with strife, so disgraced by those horrid scenes, the recital of which is almost enough to “make the two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,” that she deserved to be blotted out of the map of nations.

His Majesty began his reign with some slight deviations, certainly, from that clemency and justice which I have endeavoured to establish for him; but this, for Persia, is thought nothing of; and there is one thing to be admitted, that in the then semi-barbarous state of the country, the ascent to the throne was generally through streams of blood. All competitors must be cut off, or so

mutilated as to render them incapable of holding the imperial diadem. The brother of the deceased Shah then lived, and had entered the lists of struggle for the empire. At this time the young King showed much personal courage, and his enemy was subdued, or rather was won over to surrender himself to his nephew, on his sacred oath that he would not put him to death. The oath was accepted, and he threw himself on the King's mercy. How did his Majesty observe his oath, and conscientiously, as he thought—that is, for a Persian conscience? * He ordered the poor wretch to be shut up in a room, the doors and windows of which were bricked up, and there the King's uncle fell a prey to starvation, some part of the floor being found to have been dug up with his hands, seemingly to assuage the pangs of hunger.

It was also said of him that one of his first orders, on ascending the throne, was for the execution of twelve thousand rebels at Kasvine, and to have their heads rolled into the bazaars, of which they made a "kella minnar," or pillar of skulls, in-

* I know of no word in their language which signifies "conscience," and if there be any, it must be of the most latitudinarian dimensions.

tending to impose respect on the people by this terrible example.

Another slight blot in the character of this royal "kajar," and I have done with the dark shades of the picture. The Grand Vizier of the late monarch, Hadji Ibrahim, had proved himself the devoted friend of the young King in many instances; he was the first to proclaim the new Shah, and to bow the knee before him. A powerful rival to Hadji poured into the royal ear the leprosy of jealousy against the minister, aided by a golden bribe, with a view to having him displaced, and his great wealth confiscated. Gratitude for the services of the faithful minister soon melted in the royal breast at the shrine of avarice—that prevailing curse in the Persian character. Some pretence was necessary to degrade and punish the minister. It was soon found, and the Shah, in his pretended ire, ordered his eyes to be cut out.

Poor Hadji felt sensibly the ingratitude and injustice of the monarch, some expressions of which escaped him. The King, now in real ire, ordered his tongue to be cut out. This being done, the minister inveighed more loudly than ever against

the inhumanity of the King.* The minister was removed, and the King beginning to repent of his cruelties, it alarmed the wretch who had been the cause of them, and lest he might be impeached, he ordered one of the faroshes to dispatch him.

It is not true, as some historians assert, that the King ordered the execution of his minister; on the contrary, he for a long time sincerely deplored the loss of this upright and faithful servant. That custom of punishment by mutilation in Persia prevails even in the present day; the hand of the thief is cut off, they say, to prevent repetition of his crime; the tongue of the blasphemer is cut out, and so on. I trace a great many of the Persian customs to those of the Mosaic dispensations. In the case of Adonibezek, when he fled, "they pursued him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes."

The avarice of the Shah I have already alluded to, but am not surprised, when I consider the extent of his harem establishment, which approached pretty near to that of Solomon's. Including ser-

* I have been assured by an English doctor that if the tongue be cut out at the root, there is no impediment to speech, but if the tip only be cut, it is fatal to further talk.

vants, eunuchs, &c., I have heard it estimated that there were fifteen hundred persons to be daily "salted with the salt of the palace."

The Shah was also a family man, in the broad acceptation of the term; indeed, it may be said that his Majesty was the richest man in the world in family ties. It never could be ascertained, I believe, even by himself, the extent of his possessions in this respect, since it was not an uncommon thing to have two or three born to him the same night. The rank of propinquity (about which the Persians are so very particular) must in that case have been dubious, since no scarlet thread could be tied round the finger of the elder born, where they proceed not from the same mother. * I have heard of an hundred and fifty sons, and as many daughters. The precocious Persian youth, and the still more precocious maiden, who is often married at from twelve to fifteen years of age, soon glide into the noose of matrimony, and the consequences are generally numerous. His majesty was blessed with the third and fourth generations, and, as I

* "And it came to pass when she travailed, that the one put out his hand, and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, this came out first, and his name was called Zareh."—GEN. xxxviii. 28.

have observed, the family ties could never be told. I have heard them estimated at twelve hundred !

The King was considered to have been the handsomest man in his dominions; and this is saying a great deal (though by no means an oriental trope, since the Persians are a remarkably fine race of people); the most dignified in his manners, and the most amiable in disposition; and, as his subjects said of him, "he had arrived at the summit of power, and inhabited the mansions of wisdom and understanding." The following anecdote I think will prove his kindly feelings, as related to me by the doctor alluded to. Another kajar came to light—the mewling infant sickened, with symptoms of premature decay. It could scarcely be imagined that the monarch's care should be occupied with matters of so trifling moment—but it *was* so. With much anxiety to preserve the infant, other medical assistance was called in, and, as the doctor informed me, the King's alarm was excessive; he was affected even to tears, and appeared agonized. The infant recovered, and the doctor was elevated to the first class of the Lion and Sun.

Of Futtee Ali Shah it was said, that he was the richest man in the world, his personal treasury

amounting to thirty millions sterling, besides jewels, pearls, and precious stones, according to the Persian report, "by rooms full." Some remains of the plunder of the great freebooter Nadir Shah, from Delhi, remained to him, particularly the "Khor Nur" and the "Deriah Nur," those extraordinary diamonds, called "the mountain of light," and "the sea of light," which form his "buzubends," or armlets, the distinguishing badges of Persian majesty. I have heard it described by those who had witnessed it, that, to see him arrayed in his full splendour of sovereignty, it was almost too dazzling for "human ken." His musnud was worked with pearls, and his cushion studded with the same Persian ornaments, of an enormous size. The crown increases in breadth upwards, and is adorned with three diamond plumes, called the "jika," inscribed on the front, "Help from God, and speedy victory." His dagger and girdle are studded with diamonds. Then to see him —

" ———— As his guard of mutes

On the dread sovereign wunt with eyes deject
And fixed on earth, no voice nor sound is heard
Within the wide serai, but all is hushed,
Mute and uncovered, cowering low to earth "

His Majesty was a distinguished poet; "he could make the nightingale of the pen flutter about the full-blown roses of the harem;" and he was a liberal patron of this genius in others; nay, it was related of him, that he was at times so "perfumed with the dew of liberality," as to give his poet laureat a thousand tomauns for each line of an ode, containing twenty-three lines. The "rose and the nightingale" are the particular subjects of the poet's inspiration, of which they say, "the nightingale, if he sees the rose, becomes intoxicated." In this his Majesty had much of "the odour of reputation," as also for princely gifts occasionally to one of his favourite wives. I heard of two strings of pearls, each costing thirty thousand tomauns.

I have already shown that his Majesty had very materially thinned out his harem establishment during my stay in Persia, conferring the ladies on his khans, as a mark of special favour. I have had many an argument with these polygamists; but what do they say! "Show me from Holy Writ that any crime attaches to the custom." On the contrary, they contend that Scripture warrants it. Lamech is the first we notice, who took

unto himself two wives, Adah and Zillah. Jacob had a second wife imposed upon him, it not being the custom at that time "to give the younger before the first-born." I cannot find that this custom prevails now in Persia; but I do find that a man is bound to marry the widow of his deceased brother "in order to raise up seed unto his brother," as Moses wrote, or as the Sadducees relate, that "the seven had her to wife." Then they tell me of David and Solomon having numerous wives, and in their days, as at the present time in Persia, the royal harem formed the greatest part of the King's expenditure.

I have done with the subject, except to say, that I am a little inclined to the harem seclusion, but not to the full extent. In Persia, even sisters are not allowed to see their brothers after a certain age. What then would be the astonishment of an Asiatic to be introduced at once to that Rose Garden of Beauty which is sometimes to be met with in English society—that beauty thus spoken of by the poet:—

" Oh! what a pure and sacred thing
Is beauty curtained from the light
Of the gross world, illumining
One holy mansion with her light."

His Majesty showed considerable ingenuity in keeping up what may be termed "the balance of power" amongst his numerous sons, being all governors of provinces, so that they might not weaken the supreme authority, vested in himself, of which he was very jealous. The governor of Shiraz was never entirely subject to him; and his last expedition was against this contumacious son, in search of the tribute money. Of Abbas Meerza he was also jealous, not trusting him with the means of paying the troops, but sending it to the charge of an English major.

The numerous offspring of the Shah could not boast of much family concord amongst themselves. Where they are not born of the same mother, they are any thing but brethren; their interests are so conflicting, and all drawing upon the Shah's resources, that I am inclined to think his avarice savoured somewhat of prudence, and not altogether of rapacity.

His Majesty had a very high opinion of his own dignity and splendour. The Persians have a great deal of that overweening vanity, or happy delusion, which is so beguiling in this life of uncertainty. At an audience once granted to an ambassador, who

was much struck with his imposing magnificence, "I wish him joy," said the King, "he has now seen every thing!" His Majesty terminated his mortal career, after a long and prosperous reign of thirty-five years, at Ispahan, on the 23d of October, 1835, aged seventy-five years; during which time Persia had wonderfully progressed in civilization.

It may be well to conclude this chapter with a list of the titles of the Shah of Persia. The Persians have almost a sacred respect for their sovereign, calling him "Zil Allah," or, "The Almighty's Shadow." They esteem the very ground on which he sits to be holy; and obey the divine command to Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet." They call him also, "Hazret," which signifies Presence, Majesty or Highness. He is the Vicegerent of Omnipotence upon Earth—the Most Lofty of Living Men—the Source of Majesty, of Grandeur, of Honour, and of Glory—whose Throne is the Stirrup of Heaven—Equal to the Sun, and Brother of the Moon and of the Stars—the King of Kings—Agent of Heaven in this World—Object of the Vows of all Mortal Men—Disposer of Good and of all Great Names—the Master of Destiny—Chief of the

Most Excellent Seat of the Universe, sitting in the Seat of the first temporal Being (Mahomet)—the greatest and the most splendid Prince of the Faithful—born and sprung from the Throne which is the only Throne of the Earth—King of the First Rank—Monarch of Sultans and of the Sovereigns of the Universe—First Noble of the most ancient Nobility—King—Son of a King—Emperor of all Corporeal Beings—Lord of the Revolutions of the World—Father of Victories—the Centre of the Universe, &c. &c. &c.

What a commentary on all this splendour are the words of our poet:—

“ Earth’s highest station ends in ‘ Here he lies,’
And ‘ dust to dust’ concludes her noblest song.”*

* In the burial of their kings they had formerly a superstitious custom in Persia. In order to prevent any enchantment being practised on the body, three stately coffins were prepared exactly alike, in one of which the royal clay was deposited, one was sent to Koom, another to Ardebil, and the third to Meshed; but in which of these coffins lay the kingly remains was never known. It may be presumed that his late Majesty lies at Koom, since he had given directions for the repairs of the tomb a short time only before his decease.

CHAPTER II.

THE KOORDS.

THESE nomade tribes of the wilderness are but little known in Europe. Having made an extensive acquaintance amongst them in my Asiatic wanderings, I will endeavour to give a slight sketch of their origin and history, which are so involved in obscurity that I must penetrate deep into their records, to obtain any thing like authentic facts concerning them.

These, the rudest of nature's families, occupy an extensive territory, called Koordistan, which it is said was the ancient kingdom of Chaldea, and that amongst the natives are some remains of the original stock, speaking the original tongue. They are to be met with near the lake Ouroumia, in

that part of the country through which I have passed. Other accounts state that they are originally from Arsacia, and the descendants of the tribes which harassed the "retreat of the ten thousand." Xenophon speaks of them under the name of "Kardouchoe," and says that "they were a people not subject to a king."

Koordistan comprises a part of Armenia Major and Diarbeker or Mesopotamia; it extends in the east as far as Persia, and on the south towards the environs of Bagdad. But the Koords are scattered over Asia in a variety of tribes. The most notorious for their ferocity are the Bilbossis and the Rewandoozis, who, retiring to their fastnesses and retreats, defy their pursuers, set at nought all government, and riot in their spoils. Some of the tribes are nominally subject to Persia, others to Turkey, so far as they are brought into any subjection, which is induced only by fear or by necessity, certainly not by loyalty, the meaning of the term being utterly unknown to them.

The tribes differ much in costume and equipment. Those at Maliz Ghird, whose hospitality I for some time partook of, but which savoured more of constraint than of courtesy, were very

fond of gaudy, showy colours. Their "aba," or cloak, was of striped camel-hair cloth, white and black, thrown loosely over the shoulders, and flowing down to the heels. Some of the chiefs wore red bag caps, hanging over the neck. The lower orders wore the felted cloth cap, bound around with a spotted kerchief of a pattern peculiar to themselves. The remainder of their dress was precisely that of the Turks,—with their large "shalwars" or trousers, their red boots or slippers. This, however, much depends on what they take from their neighbours.

The Koords are heavily armed with the pistols, the staghan, and a carbine slung across their shoulders; they have also a long lance, which they use with much dexterity, and some of them carry a small shield, curiously studded with brass buttons, or other such material. They have also a steel corslet, inlaid with sundry devices, all of which were hieroglyphics to me. I have seen some of the Koords of Sulimania having long streaming silk tassels below the felt cap, flowing over the shoulders, giving them a striking appearance; but these were only the very *élite*—the Pasha and his grand vizier, &c.

From what I have seen of the territory of the Koords, they live in fat pastures, surrounded by a cluster of mountains, small and large, girding them in as it were, so that I have often thought it impossible to get out of the belt. These plains afford rich herbage for their flocks. The wealth of the pastoral tribes consists principally in their flocks and herds, and their land appeared to be overflowing with milk and honey. They cultivate but sparingly those plains, which yield grain of all sorts, cotton, tobacco, and flax. But what cultivation can be expected, when in the midst of it the mattock and the spade must be sometimes exchanged for the ataghan and the musket, to keep off their intrusive neighbours? Thus have I seen the cultivators put to flight by a flying band of Koords coming down amongst them, who in their turn were put to flight by one still stronger.

The mountains, some of which are almost inaccessible, afford safe retreats for themselves and their families. It may be truly said of them—

" The wilderness is theirs with all its caves,
Its hollow glens, its thickets, and its plains;
Unvisited by man, there they are free
Woe to the tyrant if he dare intrude
Within the confines of their wild domain."

The Koords are certainly the ugliest race that I ever met with. They have strong and coarse features, and a most fierce expression of countenance; and in the varied colours of their costume they present a most picturesque appearance. They have a contempt for civilized communities, looking upon warfare, pillage, and destruction, as the only professions worthy a Koordish gentleman. They riot in their wild freedom; the Goths and Vandals were nothing to them in these respects. They may be deemed the fiercest of all God's family of man—even more so than the Arabs and Bedouins.

The Koords are endowed with an indomitable courage, which is enhanced by the circumstances in which they are placed. They have to live upon the goods of their neighbours, which they must fight for; and so natural does it seem to them to take the property of others, that every stranger coming amongst them is deemed "lawful prize;" and as the opportunities for plunder do not often occur, they are extremely fierce and relentless in their attacks, particularly on caravans. They will also descend to petty thefts when they have no other opportunity of exercising their calling. A large caravan was plundered by

them in the year 1834, on the frontier between Turkey and Persia, and goods destroyed and plundered to the amount of one hundred thousand tomauns, and at great expense of life amongst the escort and muleteers.

The safety of those frontiers is mutually guaranteed by the respective governments of Turkey and Persia, for the passing of caravans; each of them undertaking to indemnify for the losses of merchandise. The attack I have just referred to was of so much importance, that an envoy was sent especially from the court of Tehran to the Ottoman Porte, to adjust the claims of the Persian merchants. I met the envoy at Erzroume.* The

* I had something to do with the attempt to settle this business, having met the Persian envoy and the Seraskier of Erzroume, with whom he was empowered to treat in full divan. The claims on the part of the Persian merchants amounted to 7300 purses of Turkish piastres, which at 500 piastres each purse was about £36,500 sterling. The Seraskier offered to pay 4600 purses, that being the amount of goods passed at the Custom-house. He said he was at great expense in paying the troops sent to chase the Koords from the territory;—adducing (*aside*), "I am entertaining the envoy here at my own cost of 1000 piastres per day. 'Kush guelden,' welcome, as he is, yet this comes out of my pocket." He further urged, that the Turks, under Meshety Ali, coming from Bagdad, were formerly robbed by the Persian Koords of 2400 purses, and nothing was ever paid by their government as indemnity. It was amusing, the contrast between

plundering Koords were the Jelady tribe, protected by Ali Khan. I should observe that such an attack was a rare occurrence, and that subsequently a Turkish army was sent down to rid the frontier of the marauders.

I cannot find that the Koords have any institutions or laws, civil or political, although they have many religious creeds. Their primitive religion was that of the ancient Persians; they were Ghebres, and adored the sun; prostrating themselves to it at its rising and setting. The tribes occupying the Turkish frontiers are Soonite Mahomedans. Those on the Persian territory profess the Sheah faith; but they are little troubled with religious scruples, and conscience is a term unknown to them.

Of books the Koords know nothing beyond the Koran; knowledge they have ever despised, and human life is held very cheap with them. Strong muscular limbs are deemed their best fortune, and an ataghan, pistols, and lance their heir-loom; their

Persian eloquence and Turkish taciturnity. The Turks are very tardy in their habits of business, and the conference was often renewed; but the envoy was inexorable, and finding that he could not succeed, he departed with his long train for Constantinople.

motto, "Our hand is against every man, every man's hand against us."

It is a singular feature in the history of these barbarous tribes, that they have maintained their savage independence for more than two thousand years, ever since the conquest of Asia Minor by the Romans, sixty-five years before Christ. Beyond the nominal annexation of their territory by Pompey, who made it a province of the Roman empire, no attempt has been made to organize them into a republic or a kingdom. "Who would be king of the Koords?" it may be asked. Yet what a fine field is offered for ambition to expend its power over a race which has never yet been brought within the limits of any rational rule!

The principal cities of Koordistan, such as Van, Ardclan, &c., are occupied by powerful chiefs of these people. They will levy sometimes forces of ten thousand men, well mounted and equipped. This was the estimated force of the Waly of Van when I was in that neighbourhood.

So long as the Koordish chief retains his powers he is much respected, or rather feared; but the moment a stronger than he gets the upper hand they pull him down, and give him the bow-string.

What knows a Koord about loyalty, attachment, or good faith? These are bugbears fit only to frighten the Ghiaours. These chiefs are for the time well obeyed, because their subjects need protection. Their manner of enforcing government is similar to that of all the Asiatics; despotism is the lever, and cruelty the agent.

I have passed many Koordish encampments, where it was necessary to propitiate the "waly" by a "bakshish," or present, by way of travelling security. These chiefs have authority only over their particular districts, beyond which they can offer no protection. They profess hospitality, and will render it to all who claim their shelter. Not one of them will molest a stranger who has eaten of his bread, nor suffer him to sustain any injury to person or property whilst under his tent. But your throat may be cut when you have passed his frontier for aught he cares; and the chances are that he will send notice to the neighbouring "waly" that you are coming his way, and that a good opportunity offers for plunder.

The Koords have been ever renowned for their courage; and it is related of their prophet Mahomet, that he said, "in uniting himself with them,

he would overturn the world." They live principally in tents, made of cloth of camel-hair, of their own weaving. Some of these tents are black, some of them of a brown colour; they are large and well matted, in which consists all their furniture. Others encamp in the open air. They dig a ditch round their camp; the ground serves them for a bed; their "aba" for a covering; and when preparing to sleep, they stick their lances into the ground, and tie their horses to stakes. I have visited many of these encampments, and as to their domestic arrangements, confusion seems to be the order of the day.

There was some attempt to keep up a sort of "harem kaneh," or woman's apartment, by means of screens, old curtains, and such like drapery; but these were very treacherous, presenting many chinks to the eye of curiosity.

The Koords are very hospitable, with their dark bread, cheese, and "yaourt," or sour milk. The latter is esteemed a great delicacy amongst them. From the age of seven years their sons are accustomed to the management of arms; the women even do not disdain this exercise, by which they acquire remarkable strength of body.

I must say of Koordish beauty, which I have occasionally seen through their tattered veils, or by means of some accidental display, that it was any thing but feminine. They are of a tawny colour, of great muscular strength, with long black hair, generally plaited, and hanging down, but occasionally streaming about in confusion. Their large black eyes are any thing but lustreless, and they beamed, as I thought, with mind, but it was of the wild and savage sort, speaking of the wilderness. They were mostly occupied with the distaff, having a coarse cotton or camel-hair thread, which they twisted round with their fingers. They are fond of ornaments, stringing coins round their forehead, and other parts. These fair daughters of Eve are of so much value to their parents, that they receive a dower for them in marriage, instead of giving one;—the husband thus paying a compensation for the services of which the parents are deprived.

It is calculated that in Turkey there are a hundred and sixty thousand tents of Koords, in each of which may be found at least two men fit for war; and being accustomed so early to the use of arms on horseback, they may be compared

to the Don Cossacks, but have infinitely more courage.

In the mountains of Sindjan, between Mosul and Mardin, is a tribe called Yezedeers, who worship the devil, and hold him to be not only equal in power to the Deity, but to be more dreaded. A father will sometimes sacrifice his daughter to propitiate this idol, in case of any calamity. They hold it meritorious to destroy Jews or Christians, and will sometimes rush out and kill the first infidel that presents himself, as a sacrifice to Satan, imagining that by these sacrifices they can avert their calamities; so that travellers run a great risk when going through the country inhabited by these tribes. In Sulimania they are much less uncivilised. There they are subject to Persia, and used to pay a tribute to Abbas Meerza. Some of them are said to be Nestorian Christians. I have seen their chief, Mahmoud Pasha, at Tabreez, with his numerous suite, dressed in all the colours of oriental gaudiness; the most imposing part of it being the silk streamers already alluded to, and of which they appear to be very proud.

On seeking new pastures, the domestic effects

of the Koords are placed on the backs of their cattle,—camels, donkeys, or buffaloes; and a moving Koordish encampment is one of the most picturesque scenes I have witnessed during my travels in the wilderness—children and chickens in panniers, kettles and carpets, tents and other sundries, followed by their flocks and herds—such a *mélange* as was never seen in Ferengistan. Their principal amusement is “chuppowing,” or plunder. This is their element. In these affairs they carry off cattle, women, and children, reducing the latter to slavery. They murder the men before the plundering commences. They sometimes come down and sack entire villages. I have passed many so treated, and found scarcely any remaining inhabitant. In one instance, the father came to us for money to redeem his children from slavery, the Koords having only a short time before plundered the village of all its contents, including the children. These were Armenians. At this place we could not obtain even a morsel of bread; and how the few remaining people sustained life, I could never imagine. At other villages we were kept off by the inhabitants from the roofs of the houses preparing to fire upon us, as any party seen in

the distance on horseback are supposed to be Koords.

To account for the plundering habits, or "chuppowing," of the Koords, some writers assert that they even form schools to train their children to habits of robbery, teaching their youths murder and rapine as meritorious in the eyes of heaven. They penetrate camps and cities, impelled by fanatic zeal, the fruits of the lessons inculcated by the chiefs, styled "old men of the mountains."

"Set a Koord to catch a Koord," is a good maxim here. I have often travelled with them as an escort through their own country; and it is amusing to see them on their small horses playing the "jereed;" at full gallop they will throw their lance to the ground, and recover it with wonderful agility. They will pick up sticks from the ground at full speed, turning almost under the belly of the horse without losing their seat. They pull up their horses in a moment, wheeling round in pursuit with a dexterity which would puzzle any European. They amused me much on the plain below Ararat, where an escort was indispensable. On the mountains some of

their brethren were carrying off the cattle. In a moment some of our party went in pursuit of the plunderers, and we did not wait the result.

These Koords give a great interest to Asiatic travel; they keep one on the *qui vive*, and relieve that monotony of trackless plains and arid mountains, which is the general characteristic of such travel. I once joined a party of travellers to pass the frontiers, who had congregated together for mutual protection. Our escort consisted of sixty Koords, granted to us by the Pasha of Erzroume. They were well armed and mounted, and, preceded by their chief, they made a most formidable appearance. The travellers were placed in the centre, our guards preceding and following. It was amusing to see with what vigilance they surveyed the ravines and difficult passes, expecting every moment to be surprised by their bandit brethren. On slowly winding up the hill the scouts cried out, "the Koords! the Koords!" and we saw a large party, with their red bag caps and striped abas, coming down upon us, at moderate pace and in good order. The chiefs mutually advanced, and in parley found that they were similarly employed by the Pasha. They

were on the return from escorting a party of travellers over the frontier, to which we were now tending. The courteous "kush guelden" was exchanged, and we were led to expect that no dangers awaited us.

I had once an interview with Bahool Pasha, a Koordish chief, at Toprach Kaleh, to ask of him an escort on my dangerous way. This chief had been renowned for his successes against the predatory Koords in this district, and his name inspired terror amongst them. In such cases the Pasha must be first propitiated by a "backshish," or present; nothing is to be done with these rude people without presents. Having announced my intention of a visit, which is always necessary in such cases, I mounted my horse, and, preceded by my dragoman, made my way towards the "Earthen Castle," as his residence was called, by a steep ascent to a great height. The way was tortuous and difficult. The hall of audience, to my surprise, was nothing but a large stable. The master of the ceremonies received me at the door, and I was conducted through a bevy of bare-legged attendants, the stable being well lined with guests, squatting on the ground near the walls, all smoking.

and looking most intently on the Ghiaour making his way to the seat of honour. At the farther end the Pasha was sitting in state, surrounded by the officers of his household; the Kaveh Bashi, the Tchibook Bashi, and other Bashis, looking very fierce, bare-legged, and well armed.

I was accosted with the "kush guelden," or welcome, and a seat placed for me at the Pasha's left hand. Coffee and pipes were immediately introduced, and we drew some long whiffs together before the conversation was introduced. It related to the purport of my visit, the place whence I came, and whither I was going—all this passing through my dragoman, the Pasha not understanding Persian, and I not speaking Turkish. I had previously laid the "backshish" or present at his feet, which he did not deign to notice nor to examine, much less to thank me for it. This was the tribute money, and the only way to Koordish favour. After sundry talk, he at length asked what I wanted of him? This was coming to the point, and I was rather puzzled so to frame my request that I might not show distrust of his own people; so I requested, in case of danger or difficulty in this strange country, the mighty protec-

tion of his passport, and the convoy of some of his troopers. This was immediately granted, the audience broke up, and I was conducted with the same ceremony to resume my saddle.

On coming out, the numerous Bashis surrounded my dragoman, crying out "backshish." I replied that I had already rendered it to the Pasha. But the hungry servants must be feed too; so to avoid Koordish mobbing, I was obliged to draw my purse-strings, and count out the ducats, which my dragoman distributed amongst them. As I rode off, the Pasha came out to enquire what I had given to the servants, as he takes the greater part of it from them! I heard afterwards that he was satisfied with what I had given; which was more than I could say myself; for I found a Koordish audience rather expensive. The servants have no other pay in Turkey than what they get from visitors; and their masters (as in this case) often divide the spoils with them.

We see in the Koordish tribes many millions of people remaining unsubdued to any yoke, forming fine troops if you can discipline them; impetuous warriors if you can guide them. In these fine provinces are boundless estates, open to all occu-

piers, rent and tax free ; and if civilization could but throw her mantle over them, and bring order out of confusion, good government out of anarchy, what a blessing would it prove to the Asiatic traveller !

CHAPTER III.

PERSIAN SOVEREIGNTY.

THERE is no difficulty in penetrating into the genius of the Persian government, since it is all comprised in “the purest despotism.” The sovereign of Iran is deemed to be the most absolute in the world ; the will of the King rules every thing ; his subjects are “less than the dust of the earth” in his presence ; with the breath of his mouth he can annihilate them.

It is a remarkable fact in the history of this country, that from the reign of Ahaseurus (now more than two thousand years ago), notwithstanding the various revolutions which have so devastated Persia, the same despotic power has been handed

down even to the present sovereign. We behold Ahaseurus, by the word of his mouth, threatening to destroy "all the Jews that were throughout all the kingdom." At later periods we see Abbas the Great putting to death with his own hand an innocent traveller while asleep, because his horse started at him; and Agha Mahomed Shah putting out the eyes of those who ventured to look at his hideous countenance.

With such extraordinary power, it cannot be wondered at that the characters of the Persian sovereigns should be brutalised, and from their being accustomed to the shedding of blood, to directing and witnessing all executions, that their nature should become hardened. But the reverse of this was the general characteristic of the late Shah; and on comparing history with history, it is an astonishing fact, as stated by Hollinshed, that in England, "during one reign, more than seventy thousand persons suffered by the common executioner; which is at least six daily, Sundays included! To contrast this with the results of a despotic government, I learnt that in Persia, in the province of Azerbaijan, containing nearly a million of people, only seven executions had taken place

in the course of sixteen years, under the mild sway of Abbas Meerza.

But the arbitrary power of the sovereign becomes much more sanguinary in those to whom it is delegated, whether to his sons or to the governors of provinces. These often begin their reign by creating strong impressions of terror, and new cruelties are invented in every shape, to add to the sufferings of their victims. Among the expedients for protracting their tortures are impaling their bodies; burying them alive head uppermost, forming what they call "living gardens;" hanging them by the heels in the market places, as the butcher does his carcases; casting women headlong from the tops of high towers (several were thus thrown off just previous to my last visit to Tabreez). But such cruelties belong for the most part to gone-by history, rather than to the present day; and they emanate more from the low-born delegate than from the Shah himself; although the latter, in a gust of fury, may sometimes sweep off whole families. On condemning a Khan to death, his property may be confiscated, his dwelling annihilated, his wives and children scattered to the winds,

or given over as slaves to the lowest of the people; thus making the name of king—

“As dreadful as the Manichean God,
Adored through fear, strong only to destroy.”

Of these furious devastations we have frequent instances during the reign of Nadir Shah, and other Persian sovereigns. In this country executions are summary, as I once found at Tabreez. Complaint was made against a delinquent by a Khan whom I well knew; he was immediately brought before the Ameer y Nizam (a man of extraordinary tenderness for a Persian), the enquiry was short, the sentence prompt. This was at noon; the muzzin singing out the “azan,” or the call to prayer, the Ameer dropped on his knees; the culprit was brought up, and whilst the Prophet was being thus invoked the man was strangled. The Ameer went on with his prayers—the delinquent’s head was rolling on the maidan—all in half an hour!

But the Persians have their palladium of rights, (if I may so say,) amounting almost to an habeas corpus. These are the *busts*, or places of refuge, consisting principally of the stables of the king,

and sometimes the mosques or shrines of holy men, at Koom, at Meshed, &c., which are deemed the most sacred asylums, (particularly the former,) and are regarded with superstitious reverence as sanctuaries. The delinquent sheltering himself in the stable of the king, even his Majesty himself, who is "equal to the sun, brother of the moon, and whose throne is the stirrup of heaven," dares not intrude in the sanctuary; and he is even obliged to feed the culprit whilst he remains there. The slave who has murdered his master cannot be touched, and even in the open air he finds refuge at the head of the horse.

The mosques are chiefly resorted to by debtors, and I knew one at Tehran who had been living in a mosque for nearly twelve months. It may be imagined that these sanctuaries are filled with refugees; but it was not so, nor do I remember more than one instance of a criminal taking the bust. The murderer may be slain the moment before or after he comes to sanctuary, but when once there the absolute Shah of Iran could not touch him. These places of refuge are derived, I imagine, from the Mosaic dispensation, to which I trace so many of the Persian customs—"the

cities of refuge from the avenger, both for the children of Israel and for the stranger, and for the sojourners amongst them."

On the personal character of the sovereign depends almost entirely the weal or woe of his empire; his wisdom and conscience (if he have any) rule everything; he makes war for his own personal glory, not for the good of his people; he appoints his successor without any reference to legitimate rights. In the late reign, Abbas Meerza, when constituted crown prince by his father, was not the elder born, but a Kajar, and the son of one of the king's favourite wives; the king gave him precedence, therefore, over the previous son of a Georgian slave.*

I have heard that the late crown prince's manner before the Shah was of the most abject kind; he would prostrate himself even at his horse's feet, and kiss the ground, to show his obedience, and

* Mahomed Ali Meerza died in November 1821, and is described as having been a brave and gallant prince. The Shah, although he had set aside his right as crown prince, was said to have been very sensible of his loss, though he bore it with much heroism; "God has given me many sons, and has been pleased to take one away. I have nothing to complain of; had it happened by treachery, or in battle, I should have been distressed."

even for a mile or two would run before the Shah, not daring to mount his horse without receiving the royal command so to do.

The princes are always viewed with jealousy by the King; the parental and filial ties are usurped by distrust and suspicion. One of the former tyrants of Persia, Abbas the Great, used to keep the "shah zadehs," or princes, in captivity, and to blind those of whom he had any apprehension of their disturbing his power. The late Shah was jealous even of his favourite son. He was set at defiance by the governor of Sheeraz, Hoosein Ali Meerza, and must have felt, amidst all his "pomp and circumstance," that "poor is the friendless master of a world." Not a human being could he trust; friendless and feared, he must have shivered at the sight of even his own progeny. What a system! Ease and happiness bartered for pomp and thorns! quiet sleep for troubled dreams! Our bard's description truly applies to the Persian monarch; "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

The King always speaks of himself in the third person; his strongest oath, which obviates all possible disbelief on the part of his auditory, is,—
"Be ser Shah,"—"by the head of the King!"

"Be jan Shah,"—"by the soul of the King!" for so deeply tinctured with duplicity is the Persian character, that even majesty himself is conscious that he may not always obtain the most implicit credence.

One of the royal prerogatives consists in being allowed to see the women of his empire unveiled, of which it was said the late Shah availed himself pretty freely.

There is a something like law in Persia, founded on the Koran, by which the duties of the judge are combined with those of the priest. The president of the court of "sherreh," or law, is the "Sheik ul Islam," or the chief of the Mahomedan faith. Their courts are attended by the "mustoofies," or counsellors, and they have the power occasionally to protect the people from the rapacity of the sovereign, whose duties are most onerous. When the law adjudges criminals, the King must order the execution. He is, however, generally guided by the decisions of the courts, except in cases where the offence is dangerous to his power or person. It is a maxim, that "the King can do no wrong," and that he is completely exempt from all control or authority.

The late Shah was very strict in the execution of all robbers; such impressions of terror being necessary for the quiet and security of his empire, which enjoyed great tranquillity during his reign. In the courts of law all judicial proceedings take place; and, as may be imagined, the decisions of the judges are open to the highest bidders. Corruption and tyranny usurp the place of equity. But criminal justice emanates from the King, or from his myrmidons in power. Nothing whatever interferes with his despotic will, except as he may be governed by prudence, by conscience, or by fear.

The punishment of the "shekch" I have already alluded to. In regard to the cutting out of the tongue, it was stated to me by an English doctor, that if it be cleared out at the root, there is no impediment whatever to speech, but if a portion be left, it is fatal to all farther articulation. Of the former I have had evidence, having heard a man who was tongueless talk with his accustomed rapidity. *

His Majesty had a very dignified and polite way of ruining any of his subjects, whose power he feared, or whose riches he coveted; he merely an-

* See note, page 5.

nounced that on such a day the King proposed to dine with Allaya Khan. The Khan, overwhelmed at the honour, makes immense preparations, wishing his Majesty at the same time at the bottom of Jehanum. On the day appointed, the King proceeds with his numerous suite, who have orders to waste and destroy to the utmost. The Khan crouches at the feet of the Shah, seeing his substance melt away in the sunshine of majesty, who gloats over his intended victim with ruthless barbarity. The deception is carried on till the intended catastrophe shows itself; the visits are renewed until the Khan is reduced to beggary.

Other expedients consist of sending royal presents to the intended victim, who can ill afford to pay for them; the custom being to make returns to the full value, or even *more*, than the "peiscush" or present. This often leads to dispute, and what was begun in seeming courtesy, ends in angry strife. The Shah will continue this even for some weeks, until he has ruined his victim.

Such is the respect paid to majesty, that his royal firmans or letters are dignified by the most reverential observances of the receivers. Those of the princes, also, are received with similar respect,

such as raising it to the forehead, and then kissing it with the profoundest humility. * The Persian sovereigns have been generally religious observers of the Mahomedan faith, which seems to be the most effectual check on their power. The late Shah was superstitious to a considerable degree, and paid great respect to the sanctity and learning of holy men, particularly to Syeed Mohammed Bakir, of Ispahan ; it was even said that he would demean himself before him. Such religious men have great influence over the minds of the people ; they become their spiritual rulers, and may exercise a power over the throne even greater than that of the throne itself.

In tracing their history, it appears that the Persians have changed but little as a people since the days of Darius ; their habits are nearly the same, such as their aboriginal mode of feeding, sleeping, &c. This was also true as to their mode of warfare, until the recent and partially introduced European discipline. In their mountain tribes there is still little or no difference, and the remoteness of Iran from Ferengistan will perhaps

* All Persian letters are made up in the form of a thread paper, being fastened with gum. The paper is blue, highly glazed, and of Russian manufacture.

account for their ancient nationality to the present day.

The most remarkable historic fact connected with Persia is that of her surviving so many other empires—the Chaldean, the Grecian, the Roman, &c. Whilst portions of the earth once densely inhabited have become deserts, and the very date and place of once crowded cities are now almost problematical, Persia survives. It has, however, outgrown *some* of its ancient discipline, as described by Herodotus. "They were taught three things in their education, to manage the horse, to use the bow with activity, and to speak the truth. A numerous offspring was looked upon by them as the greatest blessing which God could bestow; to affirm a falsehood was accounted the greatest infamy next to that of being in debt, which exposed a man to the necessity of lying." How they have fallen from their first estate, my reminiscences wofully show; and although the Persian empire has survived the wrecks of ages, and outlived so many other powerful kingdoms, yet what a shadow is it now of its former greatness, when in its palmy days six millions of warriors were assembled under one banner! more than one-half the entire population

of the present day,—which Sir John Malcolm estimated at ten millions; being about a hundred to the square mile.

The revenues of Persia, so far as any estimate can be made of them, the same writer calculates at six millions sterling, partly derived from the “*sadir*,” or arbitrary impost, already alluded to, and the “*peiscush*,” or voluntary offerings of the “*Nu Rooz*.” The villages are farmed by the different Khans, and yield a certain income. Then there is the “*gumrook*,” or duties on imports and exports, which is not very heavy. These and other miscellaneous sources supply the income of the Shah of Persia, the deficits being made up of spoiliations.

Persia affords one instance that despotism is the most enduring of all governments, and China is another proof. What a lesson this to the rampant democrats, who threaten to swamp all governments, and to annihilate all monarchies; and who had lately in a neighbouring country nearly burst the floodgates of democracy, perhaps to their own utter destruction, and to the dislocation of the other states of Europe.

On my travels in the dominions of “his most despotic majesty,” order, peace, and contentment

reigned. In the places I have visited, no attempt was ever made to upset constituted authorities, no resistance to legitimate taxation, no noisy agitator spouting rebellion and threatening to dismember an empire; nothing of the sort can happen in Persia; the noisy demagogue would quake before Majesty instead of deriding it;—a breath of the Shah's mouth would silence the traitor. I have great respect for dignities; not that which degenerates into slavish fear, and converts a rational creature into a mandarin; but a religious loyalty to the powers that be, whether it be "to the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him." Though I have seen the Asiatics fly at the presence of their sovereign, yet I deem the Persian peasant's a much more enviable lot than the British artisan's, if once stimulated by democratic licentiousness, the frenzy of which has lately so cankered our isles. If power become diseased, and its equilibrium be lost, if there be no happy medium, I would say—Persia and its despotism, in preference to England with a licentious democracy.

With all abjectness to their government, there is a sort of recklessness in the Persian character;

they are joyous and light-minded, there being no to-morrow for them. It may be well imagined that they are not given to any thing like grief or despondency. Hypochondriacism is alike unknown to themselves or their language; there is such a fluctuation in their fortunes, and they are so buoyant in their expectations, that to be disgraced by the sovereign is no disgrace to them; they are all subject to it, and they may be raised to-morrow to the pinnacle of greatness. If despoiled of their fortunes, though they feel it sensibly, they expect by intrigue and industry to retrieve them. I have seen them with an atlas of difficulties weighing upon them, under which they may bend, but are never to be subdued.

My observations of the Persian character confirm the remark of Mr. Forbes Winslow, in his late most able and interesting work, "The Anatomy of Suicide," in which he says—"In despotic countries suicide and insanity are seldom heard of; the passions are checked by the nature of the government." Of insanity I never heard of any instance in Persia; of self-destruction only one at Tabreez. I allude to the case of Hadji Cossim blowing his brains out with a pistol. He was generally es-

teemed "audem akl," a man of sense, and "fikir" also of "reflection;" and what made it the more unaccountable, so far as any motive can be divined for it, he was a man in easy circumstances, not connected with trade; he had a good income, derived from the rent of houses and gardens. Amongst the former was that of the British residency, of which he was the proprietor. Another instance occurred during my stay at Constantinople in the year 1836, of a Persian merchant drowning himself in the Bosphorus, owing it was supposed to some silk speculations and other commercial involvements.

The Persians are very incredulous, and tenacious of being imposed upon by untruths, in which they deal so liberally themselves. I have been often appealed to, to confirm the statement made by others: "Although (say they) we tell lies ourselves, we do not like it in others." They are amazingly fond of news, and eager for information, and will talk on religion, politics, and any subject with much vivacity, accosting you with "Che kabre"—What news? They are never at a loss themselves, for their lively imaginations will supply the absence of all gazettes. I had some dif-

difficulty in getting credence amongst them for some of my English anecdotes, such as travelling in this country without horses faster than they could with them. As to conveying to them a correct idea of steam power, that I gave up in despair; I pointed to the steam issuing from a tea-kettle, and endeavoured to explain how it acted as a momentum in driving us through the air. How Hadji laughed! "Tamum shud ast,"—"it is finished," he said; "I never can believe that." Nothing in the Thousand and One Nights could be more marvellous to the Persians. It was an extravaganza far beyond anything they could offer. Then again, as to our having a passage under the Thames: my attempts to explain this brought me into great discredit. But when I declared I had myself been in it, "Raust ast!"—"It is true!" they exclaimed, but with a look and expression which evidently showed that they did not believe a word of the matter.

CHAPTER IV.

DOMESTIC LIFE IN PERSIA.

THIS is rather a tender subject for the Ferenghee stranger. It is most difficult to pry into the pene-tralia of Persian society, since with all their polite-ness, they have a secret contempt for kaffirs, or infidels, and many have an aversion from being mixed up with them. As to domesticating one-self with a Persian family, that is quite out of the question. They have a code of religious laws, called the Jumah Abassi, which reckons the touch of infidels to be pollution; and they would not use their drinking vessels, pipes, &c. Of the latter I have seen many exceptions; but I speak *generally*.

It is true at the present day what Herodotus said of the Persians of old—that “they esteem themselves the most excellent of mankind.” Flattery and falsehood are two prominent features of their character;—the former they call “laughing at his beard.” The latter, Saadi thus speaks of: “Falsehood, mixed with good intentions, is preferable to truth tending to excite strife.” This latter is so proverbial amongst them, that they do not deny it, nor is it at all esteemed a national reproach. I heard a Persian once admit, that from this habitual custom of falsehood, he *could* not speak the truth if he tried. I have even heard the habit of deceiving considered as a *virtue*, and most plausibly argued upon as such. “Suppose the Ketkodch of a village is able to protect the lives or property of the people by falsehood—is he not justified, or even bound, to have recourse to it?” Falsehood may be deemed, therefore, a principal ingredient in their society as a social body; and to avoid the effects of government tyranny and oppression, they have recourse to all sorts of lying and duplicity.

But in the domestic life of Persia this habit has an appalling effect. Servants practise it with

astonishing hardihood, and it leads to those bare-faced frauds which are common amongst them. Cheating is so well understood to be a part of the service, or rather the gains by it, that they adopt it without remorse, or having any sense of its being wrong. But this demoralising principle extends into the bosoms of families; and the finer feelings of confidence, love, and respect amongst each other are uprooted by suspicion, jealousy, and mistrust—those venomous enemies to all domestic peace.

The urbanity of the Persians is generally admitted; it is said of them that they are the politest people in the East. Fond of the marvellous, and of most imaginative minds, they carry their courtesy so far as to coin the most wonderful stories merely for your amusement: they deceive in order to please you. Their vanity, too, has something to do with this, since it proves the versatility of their genius, and their great desire to be thought well of.

The lower orders of Persia are great observers of ceremonies between each other, and use the most courteous phrases. This I have noticed amongst the numerous servants in the "kavch

khanehs," or waiting rooms; they are as polite as their masters, the Khans, within.

As the Persians generally rise with the sun, their visits are sometimes made as early as six o'clock in the morning. The Khans, and great men, go on horseback, attended by numerous followers—one bearing his pipe, another his slippers, &c. The great man of the house, seated on his nummed, receives his guests, who are placed most scrupulously according to rank, his left hand being the seat of honour. The numerous servants outside are meanwhile preparing kalleons,* tchibooks, coffee, &c., according to the demands for the same.

Sitting back on the legs is the invariable Persian custom. From this position the host gets up, and compliments his guests with "My eyes

* Smoking the kalleon is the favourite amusement of the Persians. This is a small glass decanter, partly filled with water, in which a long tube is fixed, terminating at the top with a cup, of enamelled work, to contain the tobacco, another tube being fixed to the decanter, either straight or with a long snake of curious workmanship. By drawing the smoke through the water, the tobacco is rendered mild and agreeable. So inveterate is the national taste for this indulgence, that when Shah Abbas decreed death to all smokers, intending to abolish the custom, the Persians would hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth, to enjoy in privacy this necessary to their existence.

are enlightened at seeing you—I am your slave—all I have is yours;”—honied words these, but utterly without meaning.

The Persians boast much of their hospitality; they call every stranger their guest; and at his departure or arrival, each person rises on his knees with the “Khoda hafiz shuma,” “May God take you into his holy keeping.” This has an odd effect. The moment a guest comes in, he drops on his knees, and then go on the “chum y chum,” or compliments. At taking leave he receives the “zhamets,” the “kali zhamets,” &c., already alluded to; then resuming his slippers at the door, he bustles out, the servants after him, mounts his horse, makes many bows, and the “jeloodar,” or head groom, conducts him out with all possible “pomp and circumstance.”

Coffee, tea, and sweetmeats are the general refreshments offered, and scarcely at any time of the day will this be wanting at a visit; sherbet and fruit are offered occasionally. Many of the Khans and government officers are expected to attend the morning salaam, or Shah’s levee. The other classes disperse, as business or circumstances may attract them.

The Persians are fond of good eating. Their breakfasts are substantial, consisting of the "narinj" or pillau, sundry fruits, cotolettes, pickles, &c. Beef they eschew; even servants will not eat it. Their bread is flat and unleavened. They breakfast at noon, and dine at sunset. Their dinner is even more substantial than the breakfast. It consists sometimes of a lamb roasted, stuffed with plumbs. Then comes the "chillow," which is rice in abundance, and this so beautifully boiled (served up quite dry), that it is any thing but an English dish. I am quite unable to speak of the numerous *entremets* that came before me at my first Persian dinner, which was with the Khan at Makoo.

As this event formed an era in my Persian experience, I will describe it somewhat in detail. The village presented a most singular outline; I saw patches of mud planted here and there on jutting eminences overhung by the mountain, which threatened every moment to crush them. The whole of the buildings appeared baked as in a kiln; not a shrub or green patch was visible. The heights showed some signs of fortifications, a species of Martello towers being planted here and there. This was on my first arrival in Persia,

and my mind having been previously imbued with imaginations of the "gul and bulbul," the nightingale and the rose—the ground covered with silk, and the air scented with musk—I could scarcely awake to the literally *bare* reality before me, of mud walls baked by the sun.

Being invited to dine with the Khan, who sent horses for us, we made our way by a sort of corkscrew ascent, keeping the saddle by clinging to the mane of the horse, and the more I ascended the more did this wonderful place look as though it had been vomited out in hasty confusion from the cavern whose jaws were opening before us. Confusion reigned every where; the wretched mud hovels were scattered here and there, some perched on the tops, others in the hollows of this extraordinary place. The buildings were surmounted with a dome formed in the rock, of at least four hundred feet high, a fragment of which I imagined would grind the whole to powder.

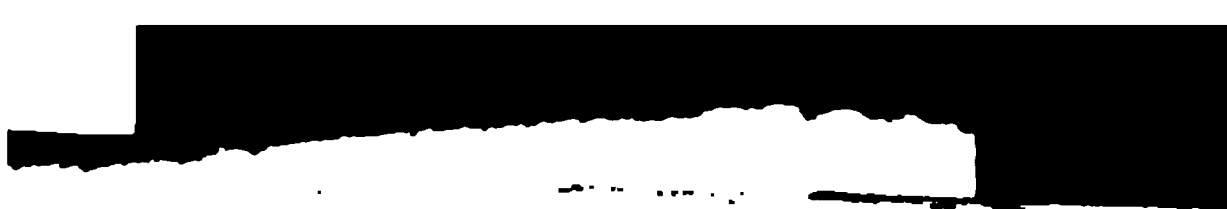
We were politely received by the Khan and his two sons on the roof of the house. Numerous attendants were bearing hawks on their perches, serving kalleons to the smokers, &c. The whole scene had a striking effect, which was heightened



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by the fine appearance of the Persians, with their dark countenances, and curly black locks hanging down below their caps,* and their long robes, some of shawl, others of light drab cloth. I formed on this occasion a most favourable opinion of the natives, whatever I might have thought of their country.

The Khan came forward as we entered, with "Koosh amadeed;" "You are welcome. Your king is friendly to my king, and I hope will long remain so." I made my most profound salaams to his Khanship, replying as appropriately as I could, though my eloquence was terribly damped by fatigue and hunger. Prayers then began, as already alluded to. All this while I was sitting back on my legs, in the most fatiguing of all positions. The Khan laughed at my embarrassment, and once or twice said, "Stretch out your legs." I pleaded how unpolite it would be to expose myself longitudinally; so doubling myself up as well as I could, I reclined against the wall and sat in tortures.

* All Mahomedans shave the crown of the head. The Persians leave a curly lock of hair behind each ear; the Turks leave a tuft on the top of the head, for the convenience of the executioner to take it up by when decapitated!

At length the "sofra" was brought in a long striped coloured cloth, and laid at our feet on the ground. (I have already explained that Persian furniture consists of carpets merely). In the bustle of laying the cloth I got my legs under the "sofra," and sat pretty well. There was a similar cloth laid for the Khan, and another for his two sons. A ewer and basin were carried round, the servant dropping on his knee to each person, and pouring the water over the hands. Then the trays were brought in.

The sort of dinner I have already described; there was sherbet in china bowls, and ladles therein; but of knife, fork, spoon, plate or glass, saw I none. I looked wistfully at my friend; for though not very particular about a *silver* fork, not to have *any* seemed going to the other extreme: and as to dipping one's finger in the dish! I abstained for some time, but hunger is imperative; so I watched the Khan, who began by eating the napkin! literally so, for it was made neither of cotton or flax, but of flat unleavened bread, a long flap of which being placed before each person, they draw their rice and sundries upon it, wipe their greasy fingers in the corners, and then swallow it!

They take the fowl in their hand, strip off its limbs, and as a particular mark of attention, hand a leg or so to their neighbours. I was not so distinguished, since the Persians deem it unclean to eat off the same tray with "kaffirs," or infidels, and I query if the servants did not cast to the dogs the remains of our dinner.

To make the greasy rice into "lugmehs," or balls, is rather difficult. They convey them to the mouth very gracefully, in spite of the hairy impediments of mustache and long beard. In my many attempts I found the rice getting into the sleeve of my coat instead of its proper destination. The Khan was much amused at my awkward attempts, crying out "Barikallah!" "Well done!" and asked how I got on. I did pick up my fill at last, with some difficulty; but one must be terribly hungry to conform to this aboriginal mode of feeding.

At the end of the repast the ewer and basin were again brought round, and then the never failing "kalleon and tchibook." The gravity of feeding being now at an end, the hilarity of conversation began; and the small cup of coffee gives zest to it. I have been thus particular on

the occasion of my dining with the Khan at Makoo, because it may serve as a description of all Persian dinners of ceremony.

The Persians are generally a merry joyous sort of people, seemingly careless of to-morrow, leaving all to "telleh," or destiny; for they are deeply imbued with fatalism, the favourite doctrine of the Koran. They amuse themselves with games of backgammon and chess. The latter they are very skilful at, and it is said to be of Persian origin. They have other amusements, such as the "pehlewans" or wrestlers, buffoons, musicians, and dancers. The former I have seen perform, and deemed it very disgusting. Want of personal cleanliness is the general characteristic of the Persians. Sometimes they scarcely change their linen until they are compelled to do so at the bath.

It is impossible for a Ferenghee stranger to learn much of female society in Persia. Slaves to their tyrants, and strangers to all other motives and considerations but immediate personal gratification, they are uninfluenced by the finer ties of affection and sympathy, and become mere instruments to the pleasures of their lords. Some

of the harem histories must be very curious could they be brought to light—where four wives, for instance, are struggling for the ascendancy of their lord's favour! My chief information on this point was derived from a "Khanum" herself; and to account for my acquaintance, I must say that she was no other than a country-woman. It required no little courage in an English female to follow one of "the Persian youths" (as they were then called), who were sent to England in 1815, under the care of Colonel d'Arcy, for professional education. This "youth" is now a burly Khan of nearly half a ton weight, the chief of the arsenal at Tehran. She *did* so, however, and the leading feature of the marriage contract was, that he should take to himself no other wife during her life-time; to which contract, I believe, he was faithful. I was much struck at first to hear my own vernacular tongue spoken from under a veiled and hooded khanum; when lo, she proved to be a native of Britain. She had established quite an English household, even to knives and forks, and her *menage* altogether was respectable. Her husband was kind and liberal. Their little girl was

brought up by his family to the most rigid orthodox faith; whilst the mother retained her Christian profession.

At my second visit to Persia, in 1831, my countrywoman had been buried in a garden outside the town, having succumbed to the plague or cholera, both of which had so devastated Tabreez in 1830. The Khan had taken to himself two other wives, and was looking as jocund as ever. The little girl was no longer visible to *me*; as I went to pay her a visit she ran off with most amusing speed, burying her face in her hands, with all that "shamefacedness" so peculiar to this people. Her father had pledged her in marriage to a respectable party.

This English khanum was shrewd and intelligent, and had acquired a proficiency in the Persian language. She had also a fine taste for drawing, many exquisite specimens of which I saw, such as likenesses of the ladies of the harem, one of which appears as the frontispiece to my first volume. She was frequently invited to visit the Prince's wives; and scarcely any European has, perhaps, seen so much of this portion of Persian domesticity before. Her anecdotes respecting the haremites were very amusing and

piquante. She dwelt much on their listlessness of character, their yawning propensities, their being so "dully sluggardised at home," as to be incapable of almost any effort, mental or bodily. If any thing could move them, it was the sight of the eunuchs, who kept up the strictest discipline in the harem, occasionally striking them on the mouth with the iron heel of their slippers. Ignorant to the most amusing degree, they did but just know the sun from the moon, the night from the day. It was indeed rumoured, that in the best informed circles, some of them actually knew the summer from the winter! But their ignorance is bliss; they have no wants, no cares, every thing being provided for them most abundantly. There is no to-morrow for them; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. They embroider and spangle their robes and slippers, and some of them will finger the "kamouncha" a little, a sort of guitar. They are said to be fond of music, and of making a noise with the "dyra halka dur," a sort of tambourine with rings. But the inexhaustible resource of the Persian ladies is the bath, where they spend whole days at a time, smoking the kalleon, eating

sweetmeats, dying their hair and eyebrows black,* their nails and hands and soles of their feet yellow, and otherwise adorning their persons.

These baths are sometimes fitted up in good style; being ornamented with flowers, scented with perfumes, &c. The ladies, when ornamented and in full costume, are thus described by one of their own poets:—

" Their glowing cheeks have tints that cast
A shadow on the rose's bloom ;
Their eyes by Lailis unsurpassed,
Give splendour to the deepest gloom "

The Persian women wear amulets or charms to keep off the evil eye, of which they are much afraid. These talismans are engraved with sentences from the Koran. They bind them around their temples, over their shoulders, &c. They are very superstitious, and have their lucky and unlucky days. Of the ghouls or goblins they have

* The hennah used in these dyes is said to be the dried leaves of camphyr, that plant so noted in " the vineyards of Engeddi." Some think that the use of the dye is indicated in Deut xxi 12, and it is also said, that the Hebrews had the same custom, though it may be doubted. I think, how far this text warrants the supposition.

great dread; and their descriptions of them are very extravagant: they look upon them "as a demon, dragon, or a fiend of the desert; gigantic, frightful spectres, that devour both the living and the dead."

From what I could gather of the characters of the ladies of the harem, I imagine that Marmontel's description comes the nearest to any summary that can be drawn, viz. "*Passant la moitié de leur tems à ne rien faire, et l'autre moitié à faire des riens.*" Though polygamy is sanctioned by the religion of Mahomet, and also the custom of secluding the female sex, the Koran permits only four *wives*; but there is no limit to the number of female slaves. This degradation of the fairest portion of God's creation, whom "man was born to please," tends likewise to the degradation of those who impose it.

Then the jealousy of these Persian lords of the creation! Perhaps, amongst no people is unfaithfulness to the nuptial tie more mercilessly punished than amongst the Mahomedans. At Constantinople, the guilty one is bagged immediately, the mouth of the sack being carefully tied over, and she is drowned in the Bosphorus. This is thought no more of than drowning a cat! In Persia, too,

they put them into a bag; but they are there thrown off some high tower, to their inevitable destruction. No trial by jury is necessary, no Doctors Commons; to be judged by their husbands and executed is short work. In this way several women were thrown from the top of the Ark, shortly before my last visit to Tabreez.

Sterility amongst the married ladies of Persia is deemed as great a reproach as in the days of Rachel and Hannah. The birth of a son is a matter of great congratulation. Presents are sent of dresses for the infant, with sweetmeats, fruit, &c. The daughters are but little regarded beyond the precincts of the harem.

Marriages in Persia are contracted by the parents, and the betrothment takes place at a very early age. The bridegroom is consequently spared the wooing and the winning, since this is all done for him by parental kindness. The courtship is performed by proxy; so also is the marriage ceremony. I was curious to learn how the contract was entered into, since the groom is never permitted to see his bride until three days after marriage. She is reported to him by some female negociator to be "more blooming than the rose,

more odoriferous than the violet, better formed than Hebe;" at which description "his heart becomes a coal, and his liver is dried up." He then contracts with her parents for the dower which he is to bestow on his wife. The contract being settled, a moolah signs it, and the ceremony soon after takes place, each party being within hearing at the time, but not visible. The service is short and simple. "I, N., the authorised proxy for you, M., do take L. to be his perpetual wife, for such dower as you have agreed upon." The other replies, "I, N., the authorised proxy for you, L., do take her for his perpetual wife, upon condition of the dower agreed upon by both parties." Some prayers are then read by the moolah, and he enquires of each of the invisible persons whether they agree to the contract. They answer in the affirmative, and he then declares them to be lawful man and wife. When the ceremony is at an end, the veil is thrown over the bride, which is brought for her by the groom; she is furnished with some aromatic seeds, which she must eat on arrival at the house of her husband, in order to have a sweet breath in his presence; a little camphor or rose-water is given her. The bride sets out on horse-

back for her new residence, accompanied by all her relations, who carry with them presents of sweetmeats. She then begins her poetic invocation—

“ Holy Prophet, grant, I pray,
On this happy nuptial day,
That my husband and his mother,
Cousin, sister, uncle, brother,
Sanction without stint or measure
Every thing that gives me pleasure.”

The feasting then begins, and continues for three days. With some great men it continues thirty or forty days, but with the poorest person never less than three days. The grade of society is much known by the time of keeping up this festival. Some extravagant and reckless persons have even spent their all on this festive occasion.

The occasional disappointment in this blindfold bargain reminds one of Rachel and Leah. No Persian would marry a woman that had been subjected to the gaze of other men. I knew an instance of a Khan that offered as much as a thousand tomauns to her father to be allowed to see his bride elect, which was refused. It is deemed absolute pollution. But under their veiled mystification, mistakes have sometimes occurred,

of marrying the wrong woman. "In the reign of Sultan Hassan, A.D. 1708, a proud Georgian chief sent to another chief, Meer Vais, to demand his daughter in marriage. The father being unwilling to give her up, and fearing to offend this great lord, substituted in place of his daughter a young girl who had been fostered in the house. The bride was received with all due ceremony, and installed as the wife of the proud Georgian chief." How his wrath developed itself when the *denouement* took place, the historian goes not on to show, confining himself to the fact of this marriage imposition.

I have understood that the marriage contract is a little speculative in most cases. There is one advantage, that in Persia marriages may be contracted for a limited period, from a week to a century; so that if any mistakes arise, they may soon be obviated. Dower is a most important point in the Persian marriage contract; and as the husband pays instead of receiving it, he thereby makes an absolute purchase of his wife.

Where the harem is on a large scale, such as the royal establishments, it is said to be a most extraordinary theatre of duplicity and intrigue. A

female having once passed its threshold has quitted the world for ever; no other male than her lord (and the eunuchs) will ever see her again; she is immured for life. The Mahomedans are bound to make liberal provision for their fair prisoners, and as I have already noticed, this forms a considerable part of the royal expenditure.

So jealous are the Persians respecting their women, that the harems are built in such a way as to render it impossible to overlook them from the most elevated positions. From the principal entrance of the great man's house branch different courts; so that the "harem kaneh" is perfectly distinct. Even our English "khanum" was similarly lodged in her own apartments. She always wore the "chadre," or veil; and so, indeed, did the English ladies at Tabreez. When I proposed paying her a visit at the "harem kaneh," her reply was, "I should be very happy to see you myself, but your appearance would produce an *emeute* amongst my female establishment." She received her friends always in the Khan's apartments, which, as I have observed, were established pretty much *à l'Anglaise*.

What shall I say of Persian beauty, completely

veiled as it is from the public gaze? The English "khanum" used to give me most fervid descriptions of it, with comparisons about the gazelle, "the antelope eye," and so forth. I will on this point quote a little from one of their own authors, whose etherial descriptions of woman are so fervid, so unsubstantial, so sunny, so feminine, that I shall be excused for this brief extract.

"Who would care to die, to be pillowed upon the silver couches of clouds in the purple-aired Paradise, while the dark-eyed daughters of the Paradise of Eden bent over him! Beauties with eyes soft as the gazelles to watch his slumber, and awaken him with the babbling honey of their voices! Beings whose long lashes arch like the stem of a wild blossom when it stoops to kiss the river! Oh, let me die and be carried to the pearly abodes of the Peris! When I am wearied, let them lull me to slumber by their murmuring kisses! Let me dance with them on beds of undying flowers, to the singing of celestial birds, in a land where the trees murmur in music so soft that the sound seems distilled, and only the sweetest is borne along the fragrant air, not harsher than the silver note of the low voiced seraphim.

Or let me live among them on some flowery island in a far off ocean, where there is no night ; nothing but the waving of roses, and the sound of sweet bells, the low murmuring of the ocean, and the flapping of white birds' wings, their own soft words dropping with gentle cadences. Oh ! I would nestle in the midst of them like a bird ; they should sit in a circle, and form my nest. I would have no sighing, nothing but a dreamy exchange of looks — the slow, deep current of indolent delight."

In closing my account of the domestic life of Persia, I must remark that it appears to me any thing but that "home" thus beautifully described by the poet:—

"————— the resort
Of love, of joy, of peace ; where,
Supporting and supported, polished friends,
And dear relations, mingle into bliss."

CHAPTER V

JOURNEY FROM TEHRAN TO ERZROUME.

A SLIGHT Itinerary of the journey from Tehran to Erzroume may be useful to travellers.* This was my second visit to the capital of Persia. I had exhausted all it had to offer of entertainment—its bazaars, gardens, baths, &c., and was filled with new-born expectations of revisiting Ferengistan.

On the 23rd of August we started for Suli-mania, which was my favourite place, already alluded to. Our party was increased by Baron Hyter, a Polish nobleman, whose occasional gaieties sometimes amused us, whose eccentricities injured us, and whose *triste* reminiscences of his

* See Appendix.

father-land grieved us. Thrown suddenly on the wide world to seek a home and the means of existence, unacquainted with any profession but that of war, Persia was the only part of the world that offered any scope for his professional pursuits—the Prince being then marching against his rebellious subjects in Khorassan, and a countryman of the Baron's, Borosky, being then similarly engaged, who was deemed the "lion of the camp." The Adjemics were astonished at this officer's impetuosity, which at the siege of Herat in 1836 cost him his life.

The Baron Hyter arrived at Tabreez in the spring of 1833, destitute and friendless; but having a letter of recommendation from the British Consul-general at Constantinople to Dr. Cornick, he was hospitably entertained by him, and sent on to Tehran, and from thence to Khorassan, at the expense of the British Elchee. He sought the Prince's service, and was immediately engaged, at two hundred tomauns per annum, and an outfit of carpets, forage, &c.

His trusty sword in his scabbard was the only remaining patrimony of the poor Baron, and it might have been imagined that he would scarcely

draw it against his own countryman ; but, "jealous and quick of honour," of a fiery and untameable temper, his fighting propensities were uncontrollable, and in the course of three days he chose to quarrel with Borosky, and challenged him with pistols across the table at the short shot ! Borosky complained to the Prince, and the Baron was discharged with a present of a hundred tomauns for his services.

Under these circumstances, he requested the Khan to be allowed to join our party to Tabreez, which was immediately assented to. Wayward and spoiled, adversity never seemed to have chastened him to any purpose ; the old leaven would occasionally break out, much to our discomfort, always to his cost. "I like not this"—"I like not that"—when he had neither food to eat, nor the means to purchase any ! I was much amused at his angry independence. Nothing would please him, and the Khan did his utmost even to humour his waywardness, much to our inconvenience. He was always at cross purposes ; he would occasionally branch off the road, and gallop on in a different direction, that we might have to wait his return, or be at the trouble to send for him. He was fighting his way, as it were, always in arms, and

comported himself with a haughty dignity, as though his exchequer were overflowing, when at the time he had not a week's supplies. All this was accompanied by an agreeable sort of humour, which caused us more amusement than anger.

From Tehran to Sulimania, the extensive road is, as it were, studded with villages; the melon grounds are extensive, the *khenauts* complete. I may observe that the best melons in Persia are grown at Ispahan, the principal manure being pigeons' dung. In this the plant seems to riot, and throws out fruit and branch with great prodigality. They build towers for pigeons, in order to husband this manure.

At an early hour we quitted the royal residence for Zakiabad, a new line of road, which we adopted in order to procure better pasture for our numerous cattle. This village abounded with that great source of Persian riches—water. The roads at this time were rather difficult and dangerous from banditti; the way was dry and thirsty, and our water-bottle had been spent in the desert. The *khenauts* had disappeared, so that there was no chance of replenishing our store. The sun-burnt peasant, stalking over the sands, looked misery

personified. Some had donkey-loads of the water-melons, of which they eat so many. Immense plantations of this fruit we found wherever there is a means of irrigation.

Thus we lingered on our way, aching on the saddle for a new position; our Baron occasionally enlivening us with his Polish airs, and every now and then breaking into bursts of laughter; for his temper was as strongly tinged with comedy as it was with sadness. Of an ancient family, and accustomed to every luxury, by the fortune of war he had experienced the most dreadful reverses. At the late insurrection of the Poles against Russia, his family took a distinguished part; at the siege of Warsaw his father and brother fell in the breach at his side, and he had just time to escape the captivity which awaited him in Siberia. He was personally proscribed; his estates were confiscated, his mother and sisters scattered no one knew whither; and as he touched on these tender points, he seemed to contend with a whirlwind of feelings. We gave him a tchibook, however, and in five minutes after he was singing his favourite air of "Moy Zister."

On the fourth day we reached Siadeen, at an

early hour, and here we were sheltered under the broken roof of a tenement, the rafters of which had been taken out by the soldiery for fire-wood.

Thence we proceeded to Korem Dereh. This "happy valley" I have already spoken of as having afforded me so luxurious a resting-place; and occupying once more the little "bauleh kaneh," I felt quite at home as it were: rather a strange feeling on Persian soil! But so it was:—the people were kind; I smoked with them the pipe of recognition, and fraternising amongst my old acquaintance, I gave myself up to much enjoyment, although so transient.

At another village where we sought to breakfast on the road, there was no bread to be had. The impatient Baron could not understand this, and, pistol in hand, he went in amongst the villagers, declaring he would shoot them if they did not feed him. We had the greatest difficulty to prevent bloodshed, and were, moreover, effectually prevented from obtaining that which we might have procured by treaty. Hungry and tired, we marched off, really dreading the *cmeute* of the villagers.

At the next station we were invited by the Ketkodeh to breakfast with him. He gave it us

in good Persian style, and was much amused at our rough reception at the last village. The kalleon being brought in, of course the first whiff was offered by the servant to his master; for many of the Persians will not smoke after the pipe has been contaminated by the touch of a kaffir, or infidel. On this up starts our irascible Baron, declaring he had been insulted by the pipe not being offered to him *first*; he said he was always accustomed to this courtesy at home, and would not brook its absence. Then buckling on his armour, he made hasty preparations for his departure, and the Khan had the greatest difficulty in appeasing him.

At Sultaniah we luckily got rid of the Baron; his impatience would not put up with our slow travel;—he took post-horses and proceeded to Tabreez. We were not sorry to lose our choleric, though occasionally amusing companion.*

Oh! the misery of travelling under the influence

* I encountered the Baron Hyter again at Constantinople, he was living at a good hotel, "*sans moyens, mais pas sans frais.*" Most hearty was his recognition; he was an usual guy and *friste* in turns; the laughing and the tears were mixed up together, it was difficult to say which prevailed. Drawing his trusty blade, which seemed to be his only solace, he said he was about to wield it in the cause of the youthful Queen Isabella, Spain

of fever and ague ! from which I suffered during the journey through the villages of Deezeh, Arma-kaneh, and Arkand, to Sheik der Abaud, the Khan's territory, of which I have before spoken. I here left him behind to arrange his affairs with the Ketkodeh, and proceeding alone to Sooma, a wretched village, with scarcely a stable to be found in it, I made my way to Hadji Agha, and reposed in the same place, and on the same mat, where our English smelter had, a short time before, breathed his last.

What a weary desolation comes over the mind in so distant a land, at the mournful recollection of a countryman, so far from his native soil, and all the sympathies of family and friends, departing, to use his own words, for that bourne, "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." Exhausted by fatigue, and worn down by illness, I was very glad to resume my little bauleh kaneh at Tabreez, where on my mat of repose I found some relief from diarrhetic inquietudes.

being at that time the only land where warriors could exercise their profession. At my last visit to Persia, I enquired about him, and was told that, invited by the Russian amnesty to return to that country, he went to Odessa, and there blew his brains out.

Here I rested for a month, amidst grievous attacks of quartan ague. The Baron, I found, had duly arrived, and was hospitably entertained by one of the British residents; but his fighting propensities were by no means subdued; for some presumed offence he challenged his benefactor, who had too much liberality to turn him into the streets for his ingratitude.

During this time I passed many an anxious day and night on my couch, disease grasping me as its victim. I made, however, at last, a strong effort to resume my journey, feeling that my recovery there was almost impossible. I combatted with my disease, and sprung desperately into my saddle, although, only an hour before, I had been prostrated by a shaking fit, which seemed to be an entire prohibition to travel.

I felt melancholy and dispirited at taking leave of Tabreez; I was getting attached to the soil and to the people; even the scalloped mud walls brought me some pleasing associations. With difficulty, and on horseback, I revisited my old haunts, the gardens, the bubbling brooks, the noontide shades, which in a grove of poplars was my favourite resort. The servants to whom I had

been so accustomed were endeared to me by their prompt attentions—waiting on your looks, anticipating your wants, with their *tchibook* always ready. All these recollections were endeared to me by ties which I found it painful to sever.

Taking leave of *Tabreez* on the 10th of October, I wended my silent way quite alone (that is, with two attendants only). My solitude gave me ample scope for my Persian reminiscences, which were often of a painful nature. It was still intensely hot, although so late in the season; frosty mornings and noontide heat.

I shall not tarry amongst the villages: that of *Tassooch* is one of the richest in the district. The shaking fits came on every alternate day at noon, when I was obliged to alight; the nummed was spread on the ground, wherever I might happen to be, and I was stretched upon it, clothed with all possible warmth; the fire was kindled on the sands, the water heated, and given me copiously (the only remedy used to allay the attack), and my patient attendants, hanging over me watching my looks, sometimes seemed to think that they might be called upon to bury me on the soil which seemed to “yawn a grave.”

With much difficulty did I at length reach the city of Khoe, where, harboured in my friend Meerza Rezza's house, I found an agreeable respite from my toils. My respectable host, though not at home, had provided for my reception; and the ladies of the harem sent frequent enquiries as to my health and comfort, sending at dinner-time a tray from their own kitchen, cooked for my especial use, to suit my invalid appetite. From those kind ladies, however, I could never get a friendly visit, and the idea of my visiting them to return thanks was scouted by Gul Mahmoud, to whom I made an indirect proposal to that effect. "Mimkunist Sahib," it is impossible; "but they have seen you, and are constantly enquiring as to your health, comforts, &c."

In this way, at second hand, many civilities were passed between us; they sending me fruit and pilaff, and I returning them penknives and scissors. The traveller, by the bye, should be always supplied with some trifles in the way of "peiscush," or presents.

Here I remained eight days, being unable to proceed, on account of exhaustion. Wearied in every joint as I lay on my mattress, I would some-

times scramble upon the terraced roof to smoke my tchibook, or to drive away the cats which infested it. I have a great antipathy to these animals, which amused my Persian domestics much. Whenever they wanted to arouse me from my mat, they would cry out, "Gourbah sahib,"—"here is the cat!"

Being at length sufficiently recovered to resume my long and weary journey, the most frightful reports were brought in, that the Koords were infesting the frontier. Robberies and murders were the natural result. Muleteers were constantly arriving with alarming gazettes; and it was deemed very dangerous for me to go on alone. Gul Mahmoud began to show the white feather whenever I talked of moving, always reminding me with his "Inshallah"—"if God please."

As I lay one day ruminating and cogitating on what was to be done, he brought me sudden intelligence that Pasha Khan, an envoy from the prince, was soon to leave for Erzroume, with a considerable escort; furthermore, that having heard of a Ferengée stranger being about to travel on the same road, he had offered that I should join

his party, and that he would take care for my accommodation. I sent my salaams of acknowledgment, with all the Persian compliments of which I was master, saying that I would wait upon him to offer them personally, but that I was too ill to leave my mat.

Gul Mahmoud soon came back, charged with ample complimentary returns, adding, "The Khan does not expect you to go to him, but he will shortly pay you a visit." No sooner said than done, and in walked the Khan, with his scarlet robes and other finery, accompanied by a long train of servants. In my then debilitated state, I had some difficulty to give him a suitable reception. The Khan not speaking Persian, and I not understanding Turkish, Gul Mahmoud was our interpreter. Thus we bandied about the "chum y chum," or compliments, until my vocabulary was quite exhausted. The visit ended by the Khan's professing that he would start when it suited my convenience, would rest whenever I wished to rest, and so on; finishing with "Gholaum y shuma my shavan"—"I am your slave, and all I have is yours." It was finally arranged that he should depart from Erzroume on the following day,

and I promised to overtake him on the road, not being well enough for immediate movement.

On the 22nd October the roads began to crisp, from a sort of incipient frost; the wild ducks started up from the many streams we had to cross, and the geese fluttered in the air, mocking, us as it were, in their flight with their wild cry. ~~This~~ species of game is abundant, and offers an amusing variety to the monotony of Asiatic travel; but I was too ill to profit by the amusement.

With my faithful Gul Mahmoud (the "Rose of Mahmoud," according to the Persian vocabulary, though he was about the dirtiest fellow I ever saw), who served me as valet, cook, doctor, and what not, and who was a rigid Moslem, often keeping me waiting for my dinner whilst he was invoking the Prophet; and Meshedee Hassan, my "mater," or groom, taking in charge my sundry baggage of pipes, kettles, carpets, and tobacco; with these two companions I set forward to overtake the Khan.

I found him established in a pretty "bauleh kaneh," at the village of Ali Shah, his numerous suite around him, and the Ketkodeh in attendance, waiting to bask in the sunshine of his coun-

tenance. I have before observed, that in these rude countries the natives think much of the title of Elchee, or envoy; for not only do they feel honoured at such visits, but they hang on their breath, as it were, every thing being placed at their disposal.

The Khan received me graciously, enquired for my health, and gave immediate orders for a stable being cleaned out for my reception. Having made my salaams, and acknowledged his bounty, the Ketkotch led the way; I followed, horses and all, and we got comfortably domiciled together for the night. Early the next morning the Khan summoned his followers, and I fell into the train; but nothing would do but I must keep at his left hand, which is the station of dignity, and where, by the aid of my dragoman, Gul Mahmoud, we kept up a pretty good colloquial intimacy. He was very inquisitive, as are all the Persians, as to my motives for travel, my opinion of Persia, and the thousand and one questions of my father-land, about which they are very curious. He had heard of our travelling by *steam*, which he could not comprehend, they having no word in their language to express it. I was doing my best at ex-

planation; but whether it lost in the translation, or for what reason I do not know, but in order to exemplify it, I gave a whiff from my tchibook *—when off galloped the Khan; he was too polite to say he disbelieved me, so he thus cut the thread of my discourse. He never afterwards resumed the subject.

It is a very pretty sight to see a party of Persians on horseback: they manage their steeds with much dexterity; pull them up at full gallop in a moment; throw the rein on their neck and fire in the air, seldom missing their bird. On these extensive plains they have full scope for their exercises. The horse snorts and foams, and enjoys the sport equally with the rider.

The Persians are perfectly at ease on horseback. While continuing his gallop, the Khan would load his gun, fire, and always bring down his game. In this way a great many birds were killed on the road, by the Khan and his numerous suite. At the different stations they were always brought and laid at my feet, with the Khan's "bismillah," or welcome. He thought it better for me than

* Smoking on horseback is one of the greatest luxuries of Asiatic travel.

the common village food, and seemed quite as anxious about my health as I was myself. He always enquired how far I would like to go the next day, and wherever I would appoint a place, there he would always rest. His kind attentions were quite overwhelming; for although, while travelling together we never occupied the same stable, at our stations, the moment I was housed, came his "peish khidmet," in long scarlet robes, to enquire for my health, charged with numerous courtesies from his master; and sometimes the Khan would come himself, to arrange our journey for the following day.

I like to recount these Persian courtesies, since from a true believer to an infidel, as they call us, there was a humanity in his kindness; and I had no sort of claim upon it by previous introduction or acquaintance.

Nothing but an ague fit, or extreme debility, now stopped me on the road; this, however, happened every other day; and when the shaking fits came on, in a moment the whole cavalcade was stopped, and they patiently waited my recovery, sometimes for two hours; and on making my excuses, they would say, "Allah karam"—"God

is great!" "Inshallah"—"if it please God!" for the Mahomedans attribute all things, be they good or evil, to the mercy of Allah.

At Kereney the Khan left me, having appointed where to meet again; he had to pay a visit to a neighbouring Koordish Pasha, whose friendship it was desirable to cultivate, he having much influence on the predatory tribes. The Khan's mission to Erzroume was relative to some Koordish tribes on the frontiers, who belonged to Turkey, but had made their irruptions into Persia. This is a frequent subject of diplomatic intercourse and angry strife between the two countries.

Here, on my solitary mat, I had full time to ruminate on my travelling adventures, finding myself quite alone on the wild Asiatic soil, a prey to disease, wasting by fatigue, with only Mahomedans for my guides, and the banditti for my neighbours, and at times feeling some gloomy forebodings that I should never more reach Ferengistan.

One of the Koords came over to pay me a civil visit; he had heard of the arrival of a Ferenggee stranger, and probably came to reconnoitre how far he was worth pouncing upon. He looked very

hard at me, my arms, the domestics, &c., and I offered him every civility of tchibook, coffee, &c., always the best way when you expect to be robbed; it tends, in some measure, to weaken the evil design. I had some experience in this way at Maliz-Ghird. Gul Mahmoud took care to tell him, as he went away, that I was travelling with Pasha Khan, who was gone to pay his chief a visit. To this probably I owed my safety.

On the following day, when passing through the Koordish camp unmolested, even unquestioned, I met the Khan again. I had a long and dreary ride of it over a mountainous district, bare of verdure, wood, or water; there seemed to be nothing to sustain animal life; no beast grazed, no bird soared; the very heavens looked dark and unpropitious. The sombreness of my solitude on this occasion is too deeply impressed upon me to be easily forgotten. At Avajek, the frontier village between Persia and Turkey, I met again the full-blown chief whose acquaintance I had made before, and a warm stable was cleared out for myself and cattle.

I always like to recognise old localities, and having passed this way so many times, I went to visit some ruins, hitherto but cursorily examined.

The remains of a large mosque formed the prominent object of interest at this village, which was well watered, and consequently rich in produce. The people were fierce-looking mountaineers, they being Koords, to keep the neighbouring Koords in order; but I saw nothing of those who had formerly formed my escort. I joined the Khan's party the next morning, and we started for the mountains.

The wild features of this rocky district I have already alluded to. Some of the natives joined our party, more for protection than convoy; but we had no adventures, beyond that of seeing a Koord bearing away a lamb which he had stolen from a neighbouring flock. Some of our party held parley with him; but he laughed at their charging him with the theft, and said that the roads were clear for our passage.

I am always amused with these grotesque looking Koords, bedizened with their gay turbans and flowing streaky robes (the abba being generally white or camel-colour streaked with black), looking fiercely proud, and, amidst their poverty, assuming an air of the utmost importance. The Khan would every now and then summon us

together, to examine into the state of our fire-arms, if the pistols were primed, &c.; thus indicating that probable danger which gives so much interest to Asiatic travel.

Occasionally the Koords of our party would set up their most savage sounds of discordant music, which the dells echoed back again. This was a challenge, as I took it, to the banditti in their fastnesses; but it failed to draw them out. One or two occasionally looked on and reconnoitred our party, but on being told that it was Pasha Khan, the name seemed to operate magically upon them, and to scour the country of all intruders.

The approach to Byazide, the frontier Turkish town, was very magnificent. It is seated on the cone of a hill, and seemingly inaccessible. This place had been taken possession of by the Russians, and was garrisoned by them in the winter of 1828, when I first passed that way. Now it was free from the invaders, and I found a tolerably good lodging at the house of an Armenian, known to Gul Mahmoud.

Being too ill to proceed the next day, I was just able to reconnoitre a little of this singular-looking place. The Pasha's palace is the most prominent

object, from its elevation at the top of a craggy hill. The whole place looks sun-burnt, and I could discover but very little verdure. The Pasha was absent, Koord hunting. Being himself one of the tribe, he was deemed very expert at the game—so much so, that it gained him his pashalic.

Byazide is principally inhabited by the Armenians. The houses are small and hovelly, as in most Turkish towns, and the more I surveyed it, the more singular did its position appear, whether from choice or necessity I could not make out. Its original founder was Bajazet, whose cruelties are so strongly depicted in Turkish history. The scenes of many of them are laid at this place. The dungeons of the palace are among its prominent features; and it is a singular fact, that an European was incarcerated in them some thirty years ago—M. Jaubert, a Frenchman, who was on his way to Persia. He was kept here for eight months, and was at length emancipated by the aid of a female. It was quite a romantic affair, as I have heard it detailed by that gentleman's sister.

Wearied and worn out, disease again prostrated me on my mat, and I was obliged to take a day's repose. The good Khan was patient and attentive

to my wants, and sent his people to know my pleasure about proceeding. I was really too ill almost to receive them, and I pressed their going on without me. This he would not hear of, and professed his willingness to wait almost any time that I might require to recruit my exhausted strength.

Being anxious not to intrude on the Khan's time any longer, with much difficulty, on the following day I got into my saddle, and we made an eight hours' march to Diadin. I had passed over this ground so frequently as to make me indifferent about the landscape. It is in the immediate vicinity of Ararat, and I have always noticed that it bears a sort of lava appearance, evidently volcanic; and so sterile is this rocky surface, that the browsing of a goat or the feed for a camel might be sought for in vain. The lofty mountain has been so often described by travellers, that I need not dwell on it. These rocky passes are deemed favourable for a lodgment of Koords, since they are so narrow that the mules must proceed by single file. Whilst so doing, the Khan exercised his vigilance, causing scouts to look out; but we were not annoyed.

Here again I was attacked by my merciless ague on the road, and obliged to lay by on my carpet, spread out, as it were, on the great highway of the world, in the midst of Moslem strangers! The Khan seemed to compassionate me very much,—which was all he could do beside ordering his train to stop. There is something soothing in human sympathy, alleviating to almost all calamities; but to receive this in the desert, far from country and friends, is doubly gratifying.

It was amusing to hear, the moment I stopped, the report bruited through the ranks, “*Sahib nakoosh ast*,”—“the Sahib is ill.” Immediately the beasts were stopped, and it seemed to throw a gloom over the whole; there was evidently a general sympathy of feeling. Sometimes it was, “*Sahib kali bad ast*,”—“the Sahib is *very* ill;” and then I fancied they were looking out where to dig my grave.

At Disdin the accommodations were very wretched. The Khan did his utmost to procure me better, though without success; but his courtesy did not extend to inviting me into his own stable; for, with all his real kindness, there was always that strict line of demarcation kept up

which is prescribed by the Moslem's law, "the Jumah Abussi," towards the ghiaours or infidels, which never permitted me to lodge with them, much less to put my hand in their dish. The Peish Khidmet came with his many salaams, but I must shift for myself, since his numerous suite occupied all the best stables; such shiftings were sometimes rather precarious.

To Mongresor, the next day, was an affair of eight hours, with nothing particular to mark the way. Our road lay over extensive plains and stagnant marshes, out of some of which the Khan's valuable horses were rescued with some difficulty. At this season of the year the road becomes treacherous, and there are many places where man and beast are in danger of being swallowed up in the quagmire. The Khan had some led horses of great beauty, one of which I inadvertently admired. Such admiration was dangerous; it was mine at once; not a word of objection must be made; and I had great difficulty to back out of the accepting it—pleading that being on my way to England, it would quite inconvenience me to have a horse; that I had one already, which I meant to leave behind, &c. The bounteous Khan

would scarcely be put off; he offered to dismount from his own horse if I preferred it, and it taxed all my Persian eloquence, politely but positively, to disembarass myself from his liberality. The civilities of the Persians become sometimes an incumbrance, and one is more puzzled to ward them off than to do so by their incivilities.

On the following morning we progressed to Kushuk-Kuy, a six hours' ride, and as this was "sick day" with me, I was kept on the road for some time, whilst the Khan amused himself with the "chasse," in which he was very successful. The game in this country is uncertain, sometimes abundant, sometimes scarce. Wild geese and ducks seem to abound, and there are occasional flocks of bustards, or wild turkeys; but these are very difficult to come at.

This village was very rich, from the alluvial soil surrounding it, called "Kareh Chummum," or black meadow, from the richness of the ground. It is a pretty sight of an afternoon to see the contented villagers driving in their numerous flocks and herds, which must all be housed. They form a sort of pastoral family, man and beast, and seem fond of each other. Then the trusty dogs—

so faithful, so sagacious—hemming them within bounds; barking, but not biting.

I have often been turned out at the arrival of the cattle; for they must be lodged whatever may become of the rest, and the clean stalls prepared for their reception, bespeak how much they are thought of in the village family. The children clean them, the women carress them. All this confirmed the idea which I had previously formed of pastoral life in its aboriginal simplicity.

At Toprach Kaleb I paid my respects to Bahool Pasha, to seek escort; and the next morning proceeded towards the Armenian village of Moolah Suliman, only two hours off; but I was too ill to reach it, and the accommodating Khan rested on my account. I found pretty good lodgings, and an abundance of supplies. The Armenian villages are generally the richest in point of produce: although a comparatively idle people, they are more industrious than the Mahomedans. Here I stretched myself pretty comfortably on my mat: the gaping villagers offered me much tacit consolation,—looking all sympathy. Meantime the Khan and his suite amused themselves by shoot-

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ing in the marshes; an abundance of game was brought to me; and, by way of change, he ordered a lamb to be slain, the best part of which was laid at my feet, with every look of sympathy from his numerous servants.

The next day we proceeded to Dehar, a very mountainous district, and where the village was of the most wretched description. I did at length make my way into a dark and dirty stable, the cattle having been previously ejected from it to make way for me. The mountains were covered with snow, and the gorges through which we passed were so narrow and slippery, that we had considerable difficulty with the baggage-horses. This was deemed a resort for banditti, although we saw none. The usual precautions were not neglected to prevent a surprise. The Khan was a wary traveller; he seemed to have much knowledge of the Koords.

"Mine host" of the stable had a particularly sweet tooth. It might be that he had never before tasted of the juice of the cane; for he attacked my sugar-bag with a most wasteful pertinacity. To refuse him might have been dangerous to the

whole of my stock, so I yielded to his demands with that courteous simulation sometimes so necessary in the journey of life.

The next day we reached Cumasoor, a large village on the other side of the Araxes, over which a shattered bridge gives but a precarious transit. On crossing the river, I felt as it were at the termination of my journey, it being but two stations from Erzroume; and a sort of home feeling came over me, though so far from my mother-land. Here a comfortable stable housed me from a smart shower, and the Khan hoisted an umbrella, an article of very recent introduction into this country.

We met a part of the Turkish army, that was about to scour the country of the Koords, who were hovering about in all directions. This was the *avant garde* of Hussein Pasha, and such a rank and file as completely puzzles description;—bare-legged, badly slippered, armed and unarmed, grotesque in appearance, but like all Asiatic troops, fierce and menacing, and with wretched appointments of all sorts.

At Hassan Kaleh the town was crowded with these raw troops. The Khan now went off to visit the Pasha. His mission from the Prince,

governor of Khoe, was to Hussein Pasha; and here I lost sight of him. It was impossible to obtain even stable accommodation when the town was so crowded with the military. Many efforts were made, and we wandered about the break-neck streets for more than an hour, unsuccessfully. At last, heartily tired, I gave the word to advance to the next village, Alvar, a wretched place—superlatively so even for Turkey.

The following day, at three o'clock, I was gladdened with the sight of the British arms over the door of the consulate, which was immediately opened to me by its hospitable inmate. Here my horse was littered, and I was myself bedded. This, after twenty-five days of fatigue and illness, was a most agreeable respite; but I was soon again prostrated with ague and fever, even worse than ever. No medical aid could be obtained; the kindness of my host was the only alleviation, and this was unbounded. I took care the next day to send a letter to the Khan at Hassan Kaleh, written in Turkish, with all the acknowledgments I was master of, for his unbounded kindness, sending him my address in London, which he wished particularly to have, saying that

he would be glad to hear of my safe arrival ; and with this missive, I made up all that I could procure in the way of "peiscush," or presents, as some return for his bounty. I received a most gracious reply, full of condolences, assurances, &c., altogether characteristic of one of the kindest, and most benevolent of the human family I had yet met with.

I have a very favourable impression of the Adjemia, and am convinced that when (if ever) they shall be emancipated from the terrors of their present mode of government, and not obliged to exercise that simulation which is so interwoven in the web of Persian society, they will prove themselves generous, brave, and humane. I have met with invariable kindness from all classes ; they possess fine elements of character, the evil features being the result merely of their despotic government.

Of Erzroume, the ancient capital of Armenia, I shall say but very little. The herds of dogs which infest it exceed any thing I have elsewhere seen in the East, and their fierceness is positively dangerous. Some writers attribute the origin of this city to Noah himself ; nay, there are inhabitants who declare that some of the original buildings

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are existing which were contemporary with that patriarch. But I had no time to explore, and had, moreover, seen the place before. The dirty streets have generally large canals running through them, and are intersected with bridges. The flat roofs have crops of the long grass growing on them, enough to feed a donkey or a camel, though I do not recollect seeing any of those animals browsing on them. I passed eleven days here, and on the 11th November started for Trebisonde.

CHAPTER VI.

PERSIAN ISLAMISM.

WITHOUT making any pretensions to a formal dissertation on the Mahomedan faith, I will just glance at the superficial differences existing between the Shiahs and the Sunnites, the former being the Persian, and the latter the Turkish followers of Mahomet. The differences between these two sects are rather political than religious, and relate to the right of the Prophet's successors. The Prophet they call "Russool Allah," or the "deputy of God." Ali was his cousin, and was further related to him by his marriage with Fatima, his only surviving daughter. Ali was distinguished by his bravery, and is now called by the Persians

"the Lion of God." His party held that the apostolic office was hereditary ; but his opponents contended that it must be determined by the will of "the company of the faithful."

Such was the origin of those feuds which so divided the early Moslems, and which to this day keep up such bitter enmity between the Turks and Persians. The Sunnites hold the Shiahs in great contempt; they call them Adjemis, and their country Adjemistan, or country of barbarians. This is an opprobrious term, as I have experienced in the bazaars and at Constantinople, where, when wearing my Persian cap, I have been frequently insulted with it.

Both sects are fatalists; but, as far as I have traced the respective characters of Turks and Persians, they are complete opposites, and most inimical to each other. A quiet patient resignation marks the former under every species of misfortune, plague, pestilence, or famine. Their motto is, "Allah karem,"—God is great; it is "kismet," or fate; and the Turk meets the mandate of despotism with the most cheerful acquiescence, embraces the bow-string, and yields to the Sultan's decree. The Persian is reckless and volatile, and

never satisfied with his lot, be it what it may. The Turk is remarkable for his sobriety of judgment, sedateness, and gravity. "To be as honest as a Turk," may be deemed an eulogium even for an Englishman; whereas, "to be as treacherous as a Persian," is often applied in reprobation. The Turk acts from principle; the Persian from expediency. The one never lies; he promises little, even after the most mature consideration. The other never thinks; promises every thing, performs nothing, and lies more from habit than immorality. Conscience never troubles the Persian, he jumps to conclusions; and as for trust and fidelity, he knows not the meaning of the terms. The Turk tells the truth, even to his own damage; the Persian only when it suits his convenience. The Turk overflows with the milk of human kindness; he is compassionate to the brute creation; his protection of the dogs, and even the gulls and porpoises of the Bosphorus, attests this; no one is allowed to destroy them. I cannot find this amongst the Persians, who are said to be cruel, revengeful, and reckless.

Such contrarieties arising out of the same religious doctrines (since they both equally respect

the Koran), form an anomaly in human character difficult to account for, and which I have never heard explained. They produce, however, strong religious hate between the two nations; and the Turks are more deeply imbued with it than the Persians, their religious feelings being more strict, and being more urgently inculcated by the moolahs.

This international hatred has been the cause of many wars between the two countries. The religious crusade was begun by Shah Ismael, a pretended descendant of Ali, the champion of the Shiahs, about the year 1600, against the Sultan Selim, who was the defender of the Sunnites, or "orthodox," as they call themselves. It was undertaken with all that frantic fury which so distinguishes superstitious warfare. Selim declared it to be a war of the true believers against the infidels, and that there was more merit in killing a Persian than in destroying seventy Christians.

In the first conflict of this war Ismael suffered a complete overthrow of his army. But the Persians have a high respect for the memory of this monarch; he having been ultimately victorious, they consider him to be the founder of the Shiah faith, and believe him to have been divinely

inspired. His reign forms a bright page in their history.

The Sunnites look down with open contempt on the Shiah. The latter, whatever they may feel, are more guarded in showing it. I learnt at Erzroume, on my way through it in 1829, that at the Russian invasion of that city, the Persians were all doomed to be massacred; that they shut themselves up in their khans, and when any of them appeared in the streets they were fired at, and many of them killed.

To return to the origin of these religious feuds. Ali had distinguished himself by his zeal to the Prophet. The Koreish tribe had resolved to put the Prophet to death; but Ali took his place, and wrapped himself in his green cloak, whilst Mahomet escaped. From this time green became the Mahomedan ensign, and is now the royal banner to all his followers.

Omar was elected to succeed Mahomet to the caliphate. He was killed by an assassin, after reigning ten years. Othman followed, and reigned twelve years. He died in peace. By this time Ali had gained a great party of the Arabians, and was at length elected to the caliphate, not,

however, without being warmly opposed, particularly by Ayesha, the youngest wife of Mahomet.

Ali was assassinated during his devotions to the Prophet at the mosque, and Hassan, his eldest son, succeeded him, but only reigned for six months. The stormy time of his government induced him to resign it to Moswiyah, who became the founder of the Ommiades dynasty. For a long time afterwards the family of Ali was execrated by the Omnian Caliphs; but their party still insisted upon their right to the supreme power. This kept up hostilities even for two hundred years afterwards; and the last of Ali's descendants, who pretended to the caliphat, was born as late in the Hegira as 225.

This youth, at the age of nine years, was abstracted from his family in a most mysterious manner. This was never accounted for. The Shiabs say he was removed by God, on account of the wickedness of men, and that he is to appear again, as chief of the true faith, in the last days. As they have, therefore, on earth no visible Imam, the King of Persia reigns as his deputy. The Persians are so impressed with the idea of the return of Ali's son, that an impostor, who pro-

claimed himself as the lost Imam, at Teflis, not very long ago, made a great stir amongst the Persians, and occasioned some uneasiness to the government.

The Shiahs are not so numerous as the Sunnites; they comprise chiefly the Musselmans of India, and the Uzbek tribes of Tartary, in addition to the Persians. The Sunnites comprise all the Turkish regions, the Arabs both of Syria and Egypt, the Affghans, &c. They style themselves the "followers of tradition," as well as "the orthodox;" and the Shiahs they call "schismatics." Shiah implies a sectary of an opprobrious character; but the Persians call themselves "the friends of Ali, the company of the just."

The Sunnites contend that the office of the caliphat is now vested in the Sultan of Turkey, who derives his right from Motavakhel Billah the Second, the last of the Abbasides who retained the title of Caliph;—hence that veneration and religious respect with which the Turks behold their sovereign. But the Persians contend that Ali and his descendants were the only lawful successors of the Prophet. These they call the twelve Imams; and their creed, the "Kelemeh

Islam," is the profession of the Mahomedan faith. Thus—"There is no God but God; Mahomet is the apostle of God, and Ali is the vicar of God;" acknowledging the latter to be the most excellent of men after Mahomet, next to whom they place his successors, Hassan and Hosseen. This feeling is kept up by the feast of the Moharem, or anniversary of the martyrdom of these two Imams, which is most religiously observed by the Persians. The feeling of the Shiabs regarding Ali amounts, with some of them, to idolatry. They invoke his name more than that of Mahomet; they even look on him as an incarnation of the Deity.

I have already testified to the Persian respect for their Scriptures, the Koran, which is an Arabic word, signifying "reading," or "to read." The Persians say of it, that "it was composed by God, and sent down from heaven by the Lord of all creatures. It is a book of infinite value; a revelation from a wise God. It is a copy from the original written in the preserved book in the volume of divine decrees in the seventh heaven. The Koran teaches that all men came into the world with a disposition to Islamism, and they only fall from it when becoming Jews, Christians,

or Pagans, by being badly taught. In the end of the world all shall be converted to their faith."

It is enjoined that none shall touch the Koran except they be clean, nor is it to be polluted by the touch of an unbeliever; and the good Moslem will wear it about his person—on either arm a part, and the remainder contained in small cases.

The Persians have a code of religious laws called the Jumah Abassi (already alluded to), independent of the Koran, inculcating minute observances, particularly in their intercourse with the kaffirs, or infidels, to whose "uncleanness" they feel an abhorrence. This code names also animals and things which are deemed unclean, of which the swine is the leading one. The hare is, by some, deemed unclean. Intoxicating liquors are forbidden; hence all true Mahomedans are most rigid Rechabites. There are some exceptions to this general rule, in Persia as well as in Turkey. The use of wine is rapidly increasing, and having once passed the rubicon, they drink to excess, saying there is as much sin in taking a glass as in taking a gallon.

Dead bodies of all kinds the Persians are for-

bidden to touch.* These laws are said to be so minute, that scarcely any one can understand them. But their grand rule of practice, as well as of faith, is the Koran. "Al Islam" means devotedness to God; "Iman" means faith.

There is something very imposing in the mode of Mahomedan worship, so far as I have witnessed it, both public and private. The former I once saw in a mosque in Turkey, which, at considerable risk, I ventured to visit during the service. The latter came before me on frequent occasions, and I observed, that whether on the journey or in the house, the good Moslem never fails in prayer to his God—bowing to the earth in religious homage, kissing the ground, and other demonstrations of deep humility, during all which they turn towards Mecca. In fact, they appear to be imbued with deep religious feeling; prayer and praise seemingly form the animus of their existence; and, upon the whole, I deem the Mahomedans, externally, more religious than any class of Christians I have met with. Of alms-giving, too, they are most liberal.

* Hagar says, "Ask now the priests concerning the law, saying, if one that is unclean by a dead body, touch any of them, shall it be unclean?" and the priest answered and said, "It shall be unclean."

In the usages of the Shiah, I trace many assimilations to biblical customs, which make up much of the religion of Islamism. I discover, also, many of their doctrines to be founded on the Old Testament, but purged from the idolatry which, in the days of the prophets, so corrupted public worship; for the injunctions of the Koran are very strong against image-worship.

Astrologers have great influence over the Shiah in their religious faith; nothing is done in Persia by shah or subject, of any importance, without first consulting these

“ Augurs and soothsayers, astrologers,
Diviners and interpreters of dreams.”

All great men have their own astrologers, whom they always consult on great events. On calculating nativities and foretelling events, these astrologers consult the planets. The lucky or unlucky moment must be pronounced by them, to commence a journey, or even to put on a new dress; and they generally find one to accommodate their clients, more particularly the Shah; for what are the stars, they say, to compare with “the cousin of the sun and moon?”

Sir John Malcolm relates many amusing anec-

dotes of astrology in Persia, in some of which, the constellations were rather unpropitious than otherwise. "Some years ago," says he, "when a Persian ambassador was about to proceed to India, he was informed by his astrologer of a most fortunate conjunction of the stars, which, if missed, might not occur again for some months. He instantly determined, though he could not embark, as the ship was not ready which was to carry him, to remove from his house in the town of Aburshir, to his tents, which were pitched in a village five miles from him. It was, however, discovered by the astrologer, that he could not go out of the door of his own dwelling, nor at the gate of the fort, as an invisible but baneful constellation was directly opposite, and shed its influence in that direction. To remedy this, a large aperture was made in the house; but that only opened into the neighbour's, and four or five walls more were to be cut through before the ambassador and his friends, which included the principal men, could reach the street. They then went to the beach, where it was intended to take a boat and proceed four miles by sea, in order that their backs might be turned on the dreaded constellation. But the

sea was rough, and the party he selected was encountering a real danger in order to avoid an imaginary one. In this dilemma, the governor was solicited to allow a part of the wall to be thrown down, that a mission on which so much depended, might not be exposed to misfortune. The request, extraordinary as it may appear, was complied with, and the cavalcade marched over the breach to their tents. The astrologer rode near the ambassador, that he might continually remind him of the great importance of keeping his head in one position; and, by his aid, he reached his tent, without any occurrence that could tend to disturb the good fortune that was augured to result from his having departed from home at the propitious moment. The ambassador's conduct in this instance, whilst it satisfied his own mind, met, no doubt, with the highest approbation of the court, and it gave confidence to his attendants; for the natives of Persia, from the highest to the lowest, have faith in this delusive science."

Sir John relates, that in his own case, before entering the gates of Tehran, it was suggested by his "mehmandar," that it would be proper to consult the astrologer for the lucky moment. He

would be repulsed with great slaughter, and driven beyond the Caucasus; and that the King would reign seven years longer. This latter prediction was confirmed by his Majesty's special dream on the occasion.

I will close my slight sketch of the religion of the Persians, by reverting for a moment to what it originally was, and showing that they are at present in noon-day light, as compared with their primitive darkness. The sun was an object of worship with the ancient Persians; nor was it peculiar to this people, since it was the Baal of the Phoenicians, and the Moloch of the Ammonites. They were also Ghebres, or fire-worshippers. At Sari, in the province of Mazandaran, are still some remains of the Ghebre temples, built in the form of a rotunda, about thirty feet high, and bearing every indication of once massive buildings; and in the city of Yezd, there still exist some thousands of these idolaters. They were described to me as a quiet, industrious race, under the immediate government of their priests. The women do not clothe themselves with the "chadre," or veil, having none of that shamefacedness which I have already described. The men are a mean and poor looking race, such at least as I have seen.

The "everlasting fire," as they call it, still burns at Baku. It was visited by Dr. Schultz, the German *savant*; and he described it to me as being "a pale blue flame, which, when excited by the winds, blows as high as eight or ten feet, and for two miles around the earth is sufficiently hot to ignite coals. The flame emits a sulphureous smell, which, however, is not offensive." This is held in as great veneration by the Ghebres of the present day as it was by their ancestors. They hold that flame is a pure element, symbolical of God, and in paying worship to the symbol, homage is offered to the Deity.

It was Mahomet who rescued these idolaters from their darkness, and with fire and sword proclaimed that there was but one God, and Mahomet was his Prophet. The extraordinary success of Mahomet in establishing this faith over one-third of the inhabitants of the globe, in many portions of which he was permitted to trample on the Cross and to set up the crescent, is an historic fact beyond human reasoning and comprehension. But the immediate good resulting from it, was the entire extirpation of idol-worship amongst the Arabs.

CHAPTER VII.

PERSIAN FESTIVALS.

THE Persian fête of the "Takieh" commemorates the martyrdom of the Imans Hassan and Hussein. They were the sons of Ali, and, according to the Shiahs' creed, the successors of Mahomet after their father. They are considered as martyrs, and this festival is kept up to remind the Persians of these memorable events, and to excite their hatred against the Sunnites, or Turkish Mahomedans.

The great Nadir Shah attempted to extinguish these fêtes. As one of the conditions of his accepting the crown, he ordered the discontinuance of the tumultuous meetings at the commemoration of Hussein's death. He did not, however, succeed in abolishing this festival.

I witnessed this fête in part, and will relate what I saw, and add to it the narrative of a most respectable witness. It takes place on the first ten days of the month Moharrem, being the first month of the Mahomedan year,* at which period, they say, the Koran in detached portions was sent down from heaven.

I have before alluded to the religious respect of the Persians for their scriptures, and their self-denying observance of the Ramazan; their further zeal I witnessed on this extraordinary commemoration, in the form of penances, self-inflicting degradations, and soul-felt grief—for so it appeared to me. During these days of mourning the mosques are hung with black, and the “maidans,” or large squares, wherein the performance is to take place, are covered over with awnings. Here and there pulpits are placed, from whence the moolahs address the audience. The effects of these addresses are very powerful; the sobbings and groanings which take place are of the most boisterous kind.

A master of the ceremonies directed the *dramatis personæ* of the performance, the leading features of which appeared to be the sudden loss of a child

* Called by them “Ayam Almadoodant.”

out of a cradle, which the angel was supposed to have carried up into heaven. This specimen of the winged seraphim by no means tended to exalt my notions of that order of beings. It was an uncouth looking female, or male disguised, appearing certainly to be any thing but ethereal.

The women were particularly noisy in their grief; and I thought that, in many instances, it was not feigned. When, however, the angel brought down the infant again, the rejoicings were equally boisterous. The whole was a singing pantomime, if I may so say—and such singing! The ceremonies having lasted some hours, they were adjourned to the following day. Men ran through the city gashing themselves with knives, and howling and shouting out, “Hassan! Hussein!” the moolahs in their pulpits doled out their lamentations, which were responded to by the people with groans and tears; the men smote their breasts, at the same time laying them bare. These are the leading features of the mourning for the time. At other places they are excited by drums and trumpets. Every one assumes a dark garb, and their black caps and beards always constitute a sort of half mourning.

At Tehran, in the great court of the King's palace, the representations of the last few days take place, where the "shah zadehs," or princes, sometimes attend barefooted, and superintend the ceremonies, dealing about their sticks to keep order amongst the multitude. The family of Hussein is represented by men in women's dresses; and as the performances proceed to the dismal fate of the Iman on the plains of Kerbeleh, they utter dreadful shrieks and groans, and fill the air with their lamentations.

As I did not behold the whole of this festival, I will briefly relate an account furnished me by an eye-witness:—"The first part of the tragedy is the arrival of about fifty horsemen. The army of the Iman then appears in the square opposed to the Caliph Yezid. The battle commences. This is the moment of intense interest to the lookers-on. Hussein soon falls from his horse, and being covered with wounds, Yezid orders his head to be cut off. When the death blow is given by the executioner, the lamentations of the people increase; they fall upon the enemy almost with personal violence, so much so, that it is difficult to procure people to perform this part of the tra-

gedy. They then attempt to represent the dead bodies of the martyrs.*

“On the following day the tragedy continues. Yezid successively destroys the two children of Hussein, who had fallen into his power. Then comes a general procession of men carrying rich flags and banners of cachmere shawls, exhibiting a strange contrast with the poverty of the people in their black dresses. Some led horses, magnificently caparisoned, follow, their trappings rich with jewels and gold: then litters bearing figures of dead bodies, covered with blood and pierced with daggers, followed by naked bleeding men having scimetars and arrows apparently stuck into them, as though they had been pierced in battle. Succeeding these was a train of camels, mounted by men all in black, with female mourners throwing ashes over themselves and chopped straw.

“These hideous scenes are now varied by a pompous and imposing spectacle: some hundreds of

* It has been stated, that the executioner, in his extreme zeal to please the King, did on one occasion actually cut off the head of the man who performed Hussein. His Majesty, far from being shocked at the loss of a faithful subject, ordered the executioner to pay a fine of a hundred tomanas!—so good an opportunity of bringing money to the royal treasury was not to be forgotten.

men being employed in carrying on their shoulders two large mosques of wood, richly gilt and inlaid with mirrors, surmounted by minarets, in the galleries of which children are placed chaunting hymns, the effect of which agreeably contrasts with the mournful lamentations. Some moolahs, magnificently dressed, are seen in the interior, at prayers by the tomb of the Imans. This has a strange effect; and produces a most religious respect amongst the people. Then comes a model of the Kaaba, or Abraham's house at Mecca, which is richly ornamented with gaudy trappings. Hussein's war-horse follows, seemingly pierced with arrows, led by a slave, naked and armed with a battle-axe. After these appear angels and genii, being children having painted wings of pasteboard, in which they make a fine exhibition of etherials. Some hundreds of people close the procession, all in tatters, striking their breasts, crying out 'Ah wahi wahi,' and with every demonstration of 'afflicting their souls' by this mock tragedy.

"During the whole of this season of the Muhareem, it is deemed a time of mourning; the business and ceremonies of the court are suspended; and his Majesty appears in black. On the last day,

which is called 'Rooz Catl,' the grand performance takes place. The King superintends it from an elevated room in the maidan, and in some measure takes part in the performance; he gives 'a tear to guarantee the expression of his sorrow;' his subjects around him are obliged to do the same. The performers on approaching near the window smite their breasts, crying out 'Hassan Hussein! Hussein Hassan!' knocking each other violently with clubs. The procession is closed by the moolahs, bearing torches of yellow wax; the chief or 'Sheik ul Islam' stops a moment under the King's window, and implores a blessing on the 'Zil Allah,' or 'Shadow of God.' The crowd then disperse, and the court is broken up, heartily tired at these mummeries, which must be observed in deference to the religious prejudices of the Shiahs."

The Persians have an annual festival, which took place on the 8th of January, during my residence in the country, when almost the whole population of Tabreez poured out towards the tombs. The burying-grounds are very extensive around the walls of the city, and are unenclosed. The crowd pressed forward from all directions, and it was difficult to get out at the gates. At the corners

of these, and in the leading ways, were squatting down Koran readers, some of them dervishes, some moolahs, gratuitously giving extracts to the passing Moslems. I could scarcely restrain a smile at the various groups so grotesquely planted over the graves, weeping and wailing, some of them in the greatest apparent affliction. One of these groups particularly attracted my attention. It consisted of four women hooded in their "chadres," or veils, exhibiting a boisterous grief that appeared to be unappeasable. The grave-grounds were this day covered with the people of the city, all equally engrossed with sorrow, some of them steeped in tears; children and old men, females of all ages; Koran readers imparting, as it were, consolation to the bodies below, and giving them hopes of a joyful resurrection in good time. It was a novel sight; and there was something deeply affecting in the sobbings and weepings which in all directions met the ear.

These noisy tributes of woe in the morning are succeeded by feasting and rejoicings in the evening; the bazaars are gaily dressed up, and their contents put into requisition.

The Mahomedans think much of the quantity

of prayers which they may utter; thus when repeating the "fatheh," which is the most perfect form amongst them, they count their repetitions with the "tusbee," or rosary of beads, that of the King being of pearls. Kerbeleh, the mausoleum of the martyr alluded to, is deemed so holy a place, and so sacred an object of pilgrimage amongst the Shiahs, that they bring a piece of clay from it, which they place before them during prayers, pressing their foreheads upon it during their prostrations.

The fast of the Ramazan, already alluded to, is succeeded by a "bairam," or holiday, which lasts only one day; but the "Courban Bairam," or "festival of sacrifices," is seventy-two days afterwards, and is celebrated with much solemnity. It is intended to commemorate the arrival of the pilgrims at Mecca. This pilgrimage is an indispensable obligation on all good Moslems; they take from it the title of Hadji. If any thing excites the liberality of the Persians, it is to undertake this journey of piety, in which they are profuse in their expenditure, and prodigal of their time; some of them will even take two years to accomplish it. I once saw a party of these pilgrims set out, with

all the "pomp and circumstance" of floating banners, and splendid cavalcades, headed by the moolahs, triumphing as it were with their long train of devotees to the Prophet. The Koran dwells a good deal, in the sixth chapter, called "the Cattle," on the history and faith of Abraham, as the ancestor of Ismael, and of their appointing the holy house of Mecca to be a resort for mankind. "Verily, the first house appointed unto men to worship in was that which was in Mecca, the place where Abraham stood; and whoever entereth therein shall be safe; and it is a duty towards God, incumbent on those who are able to visit this house."

I saw nothing in Persia, when commemorating this festival of the "Courban Bairam," to compare with the pomp and parade of its celebration at Constantinople, where I have frequently witnessed it. A camel, richly caparisoned, is immolated by the prince or governor of the town, wherever it may be. A portion is reserved for the King and his family. At Tehran, it was formerly the custom for Majesty to strike the first blow at the victim. The inhabitants sacrifice lambs on the occasion, the greater part being given away to the poor.

New dresses are generally sported, and the people are prodigal with their "bughulgeeree," or embracing each other. They all take their "keyf," or enjoyment. The salaam takes place at the palace, and the rejoicings are second only to those of the "Ede y nu Rooz."

The "Ede y Kourban" takes place in September, to commemorate Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac. Immense quantities of cattle are slain on this occasion, and some of them roasted on the spot, pieces of which are presented to the people, and eaten with avidity. The great men of the cities and provinces slay a camel, and eat of its flesh at the place where it is roasted. This festival is thought but little of in comparison to the preceding.

In the south of Persia, about the middle of the month of June, they have a sort of festival in execration, as it were, of the Caliph Omar, by celebrating his death. They fix on a large platform an image, as deformed as possible, and begin to revile it, as having supplanted Ali, the lawful successor to Mahomet; and they attack it with stones and sticks until it is completely destroyed. This image is filled with sweetmeats, which are scattered to the mob who attend the ceremony.

CHAPTER VIII.

JAMALABAD.

THIS village, in the wild and uncivilized district of Karadagh, is situated on an eminence, commanding the view of a smiling plain below. Happiness and abundance seemed to reign here in solitary tranquillity. This solitariness is a peculiar feature of the unpeopled soil of Persia. The climate of Karadagh resembles more that of England than any I had known in Persia; changeful, with gusts of wind, and gleams of intermitting sunshine. The soil being watery is consequently fruitful; and many a pretty nook did I see, called "Gul Chy," or place of flowers, the surface of which was a blooming garden, untrimmed, uncultivated—the

tulip and the rose profusely scattered on a velvet turf. Here and there occurred a straggling village of most wretched aspect, the miserable inhabitants of which seemed to struggle, as it were, for existence; they appeared to be quite insensible to the beauties which surrounded them.

Some of these villages and natives were handed over to my friend the Khan, by Abbas Meerza; the natives were the most abject of their race. In this "ballook," or district of villages, I enjoyed the balmy breath of May, always on horseback, which gives an elasticity to the frame, and a buoyancy to the feelings, that must be felt to be understood. Then the ravenous appetite, which grows with the scarcity of food, and the hearty sleep on the hard ground! All these are natural delights, which I much prefer to the fictitious enjoyments of more cultivated life.

I contracted quite a regard for these wild aborigines. Where they are untainted by much intercourse with their fellows there is an original simplicity about them, but little removed from that of their camels and asses. They do nothing beyond what necessity dictates; they bask in the sun, sleep and smoke—smoke and sleep—thus whiling

away existence, negatively happy in their mud regions, which are of the most wretched fabric, built only for the day, and leaving posterity to take care of themselves; "Beings of yesterday and no to-morrow." Their large walled gardens, however, bespeak something like opulence, and the narrow entrances show the owner's mistrust of the government which protects him. A huge stone, about three feet high, is hung at one corner of the walls, which it is difficult to move on its heavy hinges to obtain ingress. This is to prevent surprise, and give the occupant time to prepare against attack. Every thing evinces jealousy, suspicion, and mistrust.

I wandered about to reconnoitre any interesting objects of the neighbourhood. The mill is generally the most attractive among them, and the only sign of industry and ingenuity. The stream is diverted to an overshot wheel; the impetuous torrent directing its force. The miserable huts containing all these contrivances to convert grain into flour are mud within and mud without, with the usual flat roof, and the machinery as simple as possible.

The Ketkodeh of this village was not at home,

so we occupied the bauleh khaneh overlooking the arid scene below, with seemingly much goodwill on the part of his servants. But matters were much changed about a month afterwards, on our return from Bahool. Hadji Cossim not being there, the servants refused to accommodate us as before.

To facilitate travel through this wild district, the Khan had been furnished by the Ameer y Nizam with a "mehmandar," or conductor, who bears the "sadir," or order for supplies of bread and barley for the whole party. This is the royal custom in Persia, as already alluded to, to furnish travellers with gratuitous supplies on the road, the value of which should be deducted from those revenues of the village which belong to government; but they never are: the sadir is therefore considered to be the most arbitrary imposition of the Persian taxes.

The Khan coming into the village, preceded by the mehmandar, and followed by his numerous train, we thought to have found the natives, as before, crouching before him, with "my eyes are enlightened at seeing you, and all I have is yours;" but no such thing, the mehmandar's order to pre-

pare the bauleh kaneh, and to send in provisions, was stoutly resisted, with the many opprobrious terms in which their language is so rich, and of which their tongues are so prodigal. I had just alighted from my horse, and on my return beheld the village presenting an arena of bloody strife, for a battle royal was raging between the villagers and the Khan's servants. Knives were drawn, bludgeons flying about (all the people are armed with knives in Persia, and a flash of anger produces an immediate show of steel); one man was prostrate, and another bleeding.

"Mount your horse on the instant!" said the Khan. "What is the matter?" said L. "Ask no questions!" and he galloped off, I after him. Every thing looked hostile, and apparently compromising our personal safety. The mehmandar was left for dead, whilst the servants and baggage were all behind, we knew not where. We galloped on for some time, the Khan seeming more alarmed than I had ever before seen him—not a word could I get from him, but "go on."

Our companion on this occasion "screwed his courage to the sticking-place," and, goading his horse with the shovel stirrups, he looked

"unutterable things" at me. He was a great bulky figure, a second Falstaff, his eyes starting out from under his Persian cap. I nearly tumbled off with laughing at his occasional glance at me, as if to enquire what was to become of us.

Our jaded beasts, having had a long day's march, now began to flag, and looking back, we discovered horsemen gaining rapidly upon us. "Forward!" was again the order of the day; our panting steeds reeked under whip and spur; the pursuers however gained upon us, so that there was no alternative but to stop and face them. Accordingly, the Khan ordered us into line, and to be ready primed for the encounter; our companion got into the rear, looking as fierce as his trepidation would permit.

"Salome alikome," said the foremost horseman when they reached us. This friendly greeting at once dissipated all fears, and we immediately came to parley. It appeared that Hadji Cossini had returned to the village just as we were retreating from it; and having ascertained the cause of the fray, and seeing the mehmandar lying bleeding on the ground, he became alarmed at this outrage on a government officer, so he instantly dispatched

his men to entreat the Khan's return, saying that from the ignorance of the people he had been so insulted. With "What dirt have these harem zadehs been eating? Come and make my face white—the bauleh kaneh is ready—I am your slave, and all I have is yours,"—with the thousand and one invocations so glibly mouthed by the Persians, invoking, in the name of Allah, the Khan's forgiveness. But all this would not do; the Khan was determined to go to the Ameer y Nizam, who was in camp not far off, and have the servants bastinadoed, and the ketkodeh degraded. He was known to be very inflexible, and this outrage upon his authority would never be overlooked.

The men implored, but the Khan went on; again and again they halted and entreated, and, at length, applied to me. I begged for their pardon, and was for returning to the village; but I could not divert the Khan's anger, so we journeyed on leisurely to the next village of Shah Bagy, where we found a tent prepared for our reception. One of our escort had preceded us, to make this preparation, being desirous to propitiate the Khan.

Whilst here enjoying our pipe of repose, and canvassing the late stirring events, the brother

of Hadji Cossim arrived. This was the guilty party; and he trembled before the Khan's anger, exclaiming, "Ah wahi,"—"what dirt has fallen upon my head! I am your sacrifice—pardon your slave." "Be chesm,"—"my eyes are yours." But nothing would do. "Vengeance!" said the Khan; and the arrival of the "mehmandar," with his bleeding head, and the wounded servants, with their report of the outrage, fed the flame of his resentment. They related "that for bread they gave them stones; to their demands for a resting-place they hoisted their bludgeons, drew their knives, and bled the servants of the Khan. The mehmandar they prostrated to the ground at one blow, the sadir or royal order for provisions they trampled in the dust, and braving them in their fury, every man would probably have been murdered but for the timely arrival of Hadji Cossim." The poor fellow knelt again at the Khan's feet—"Your slave is no better than an ass—I have eaten dirt—what film has covered my eyes. Aman aman. Merry." "Shitann-bud,"—"it was the devil, what had I to do it since I was only his agent?"—with a thousand other ingenious excuses.

We all pleaded for the delinquent— even M—

relented; so, at last, it was put down to the devil's account, and the Khan forgave him. The fellow was in ecstasies;—his toe-nails were safe, and he capered for joy. We then made a social meal of it; the pillau was served up rich in grease, and we squatted together in the strictest harmony. I should have preferred not to partake of it, but this would have looked inimical to friendship, so I bolted the pill of reconciliation, and smoked the pipe of peace.

The next morning we left Shah Bagy, being summoned by the charwardars at an early hour. These people conduct the caravan with a patient endurance of fatigue and privation, such as I have never seen in any other: with the monotonous toil of their daily life, following the beasts of burden, with the tinkling of the bells suspended to the leaders, making a foot travel of it for many hours; then having to clean the animals, with the sundry loading and unloading, mending the pack-saddles, occasionally taking a nap on the bare ground, the fierce sun drying up all their moisture; the cattle in the meantime cropping the herbage during the mid-day rest, or chewing the barley from out the "tobrah," or nose-bag, with which each mule is

furnished. There lie these charwardars basking, until the sun gives notice of retirement, when they resume the march under cooler auspices. On arrival at the station they measure out the barley, arrange the loads for the night's bivouack and clean the cattle. *They* are the last thought of or cared about, even by themselves; and yet withal they are cheerful and happy, and if they can get a mess of "moss," or sour milk, supremely so; if not, with their barley bread and a smoke, they are easily contented, and their sound sleep may be envied by a monarch.

In this way they will march for a month the same monotonous routine; some journies take double this time. I have noticed them sometimes in the villages waiting for a job, listless, and quite out of their element. The tinkling of the bell announces that the "caravan is come," and in a moment they are all animation. I have often admired the contentment of these humble slaves—a quality of great worth, however mean the garb which clothes it.

On our way we met a dervish, a most singular-looking being, having a sheep's skin thrown loosely over him, which scarcely covered his body. His

feet were bare; in his right hand he held a pike, and in his left a kettle; a wreath of flowers decked his head; and he set up the most dreadful cries of "Hak, hou!" invoking us in the name of Allah. He seemed quite indifferent whether you threw any thing into his kettle or not, and without any sort of *reconnoissance* for your so doing. I had seen these dervishes before, in the bazaars. They are called "gousheb nishins," or sitters in the corners, and proclaim their doctrines in the market-places, sometimes sounding the blast of a horn, then uttering the most piercing cries. They are much respected by the populace, and, in some instances, feared.

There was nothing in Persian travel which struck me so forcibly as the Sabbath being struck out of their calendar, as it were—that

" Most beautiful of days, when man retreats
Within himself, and with his Creator holds
Sweet converse."

It is true, that in continental travelling one gets accustomed by degrees to lose that rigid observance of it so noticeable in England, and which foreigners denominate so *triste*. The Mahomedans are by no means rigid observers of the Sabbath; the set-

ting apart one day of the week (Friday), which they call the "prince of days," and the day on which the last judgment will be solemnized, is required by Mahomet, though he does not demand the whole of it being consecrated to the service of God. There is less observance of this day in Persia than in Turkey; the Shah would seldom, if ever, go to the mosque, the Sultan would always go in great pomp on the Friday.

Pursuing our way to Veran Kash, we had to cross a rocky pass, which was occupied by a Koordish encampment, situated in a beautiful part of the wilderness. These nomades have apparently very good taste in this way. Whether their positions were dictated by necessity or by choice, I cannot tell—

" Rude rocks and wild woods were their palaces,
Streamlets their music, fountains their delight ;
The azure canopy of cloudless Heaven
Their temple, and the cliff their mountain home."

It was now the month of July, and the sun warned us to make hasty retreat to our place of sojourn; we entered cheerfully into the stable, from whence the sun's rays were excluded, and where a dish of sour milk waited for our refresh-

ment. At this pretty village I had my full share of the vagabondising life, which I have so much enjoyed in the land of Iran, having remained here for some time. The water was abundant, and found its way to the numerous gardens, which were rich in their varied produce. The dogs, too, were civil—a most important courtesy to meet with in a Persian village. I love to revel in these Persian gardens, and find much entertainment, and, it may be, instruction, in these living emblems of Nature's magnificence. It is nature, after all, which strikes home to the heart, and finds a responsive chord in every bosom, where—

“ ————— Not a tree,
A plant, a leaf, a blossom, but contains
A folio volume ; we may read, and read,
And read again, and still find something new.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE LATE WAR BETWEEN PERSIA AND RUSSIA.

THIS subject having been named to me by the Crown Prince, Abbas Meerza, when I had the honour of an interview with him, I gathered from himself some of the events connected with these hostilities, of which the following are the leading features.

This war, which proved so disastrous to Persia, grew out of an undefined treaty, called "the treaty of Gulistan." The Russians, having concentrated their strength in Georgia to the amount of a hundred and fifty thousand men, began to call in question this treaty, and numerous con-

ferences took place, and commissioners were appointed on both sides; but they differed so much in their construction of the treaty, that the breach widened at each meeting.

The Russians, in the meanwhile, began their territorial encroachments, and established posts, not only on the doubtful territory, but on that which was decidedly not their own. The negotiations commenced in 1817, and were continued until 1825, when the Russian troops possessed themselves of a part of the Persian frontier.

In January 1826, at the death of the late Emperor Alexander, it was hoped that the reigning emperor would be more disposed to an accommodation. He sent Prince Menzikoff to announce his accession to the throne, and to arrange the boundaries of the two kingdoms with the Prince Royal of Persia. His Royal Highness, who was always strongly in favour of British interests, advised the Shah not to receive the mission until the territory, so unjustly taken possession of by the Russians in 1825, was given up. But the Shah thought differently on the subject, and ordered the Prince to receive the Russian ambassador. The Prince did receive him with great respect, and commissioners

were immediately appointed to enquire into, and arrange, if possible, this disputed frontier.

In the meantime, the Russians were not inactive. They advanced their troops as though predetermined on the result, and as if they sought to provoke hostilities, even while in the act of negotiating. Abbas Meerza felt very keenly these indignities. His known courage and independent spirit could ill brook this duplicity, and he warmly urged the Shah to commence hostilities, even though the Prince's personal interests were formerly identified with those of Russia; for in the treaty of Gulistan, his succession to the throne of Persia was guaranteed to him, to the exclusion of his elder brother. It is true this brother was now dead, and his undoubted right by birth was fully established.

Many grievous insults were continually inflicted on Persia by the Russians. I cannot particularise them; but they were partly of a religious nature, since the moolahs were warmly excited, and called aloud on their king for revenge. His Majesty, whose temperate conduct and great forbearance were well known, thought it better to negotiate; and he tried every means to procure from the new envoy

such territorial terms as he conceived should be satisfactory to both parties; but the ambassador declared that he was not authorised to accept the terms proposed by the Shah without referring to his court.

In the meantime, the ferment in the public mind continued to increase, till it became almost a national feeling. "Our religion is in danger," was the cry of the moolahs, headed by their chief, the Mooshtahed; and the patriotic feelings of the Prince Royal were aroused for the honour and dignity of the country which he might be one day called on to govern. At length the flame spread all around, and war became inevitable.

In July 1826, the crisis arrived, and war was declared. The numerical force of the Persians in this grand undertaking was about fifty thousand men. His Royal Highness opened the campaign. Brave as the lion which surmounted his shield, and brilliant as the sun which brightened it, were the first deeds of the royal general. Vigorous in attack, and active in his movements, he surprised the Russian troops, and drove them back from their new posts, captured some of their stores, and every thing seemed to forbode a brilliant termina-

tion of the war. I am without the means of reporting particular actions, but such as I have described was the general character of the hostilities for the first twelve months, and except in instances of overwhelming numbers, Abbas Meerza was uniformly successful. His troops fought desperately before Erivan; they repulsed the Russians, drove them far within their own boundary, and had nearly taken possession of Teflis.

The Georgians, having suffered greatly under the yoke of their former governor-general, Yermoloff, joyfully received the Persians. This warlike people, having flown to arms, cut off the Russian detachment, and horrible barbarities were committed between them and the Russians, such as are quite inconsistent with modern warfare. The barbarous custom of the East still continues, of cutting off the heads of the slain, and piling them in heaps before the royal camp, where they are sometimes burnt. Numerous piles of Russian heads were thus formed, which marked the extent of the loss of the enemy. The first trophies of victory which reached Tabreez were fifty camel-loads of Russian heads, each camel bearing eight hundred heads, surmounted by a prisoner; and

heads were seen rolling about in the maidan and the bazaars in gory variety. It is a very ancient practice in Persia to offer a premium for heads during the war; and though in Turkey they get them without purchase, yet here they were worth as much as five tomanms each; and it has been stated to me, that they have actually cut off the heads of their own people to obtain the premium.

The Prince, in crossing the Arras, took some prisoners, and on his advance defeated a large party of the Russians. This emboldened him to march upon Sheesha, which he took with a numerous garrison. Here he established himself for a time, and sent out one of his generals, Ameer Khan, accompanied by a young prince, son of Abbas Meerza, with ten thousand men towards Teflis. They were encountered by a considerable Russian force, and a battle took place, to the disadvantage of the Persians.

This was the first defeat which his Royal Highness's arms had received. He now retired from Sheesha, and marched upon Teflis, to endeavour to wipe out the stain of this defeat, and revenge himself for the loss of his general. Meantime the Russian commander-in-chief had been changed;

General Yermoloff had been superseded by General Paskevitch, who was at the head of a numerous and well-disciplined army. This army the Prince resolved to attack. The Russian troops received his onset firm and immovable in their squares, which were not to be broken by the active flying manœuvres of the Persians, who fought desperately, and did great honour to their country and their Prince. Their gallant commander seemed to hover over and direct every rank and file; his activity and bravery were never more conspicuous; it seemed as if he was fighting for empire as well as for life; and nothing but the overwhelming numerical force of the Russians, aided by their large amount of artillery, drove him from the field, from which his battalions at last fled in great confusion, with the loss of their standards, their guns, and some thousands of men.

To this indiscreet attack on the part of his Royal Highness may perhaps be attributed his subsequent disasters. He himself fled with a few attendants almost to the banks of the Arras; while the remaining troops, without their leader, marked with all the horrors of insubordination and plunder their disastrous retreat.

In the meantime, the Shah had himself approached the seat of war. He established a camp not far from Tabreez. His troops were chiefly raw and untrained lands, without pay, order, or discipline. They plundered the villages on the way, under the pretence of raising contributions for the war, and thus became a pest instead of a safeguard to their country. The Shah brought with him about eighty thousand men, and in his impetuous bravery, threatened to march to Moscow. His troops, however, demanded pay, which the King refused to give them. They then helped themselves to every thing the villages would afford, and, as a *dernier ressort*, they stole the children from one place and sold them at another for a few piastres! Plunder seems to be the chief object of Persian warfare; the love of it is so engrained in their nature, that the moment they meet with any reverse they attack their own camp, which suffers generally more from natives than from foreigners.

There were some troops of a higher caste, called the "Gholaums," who had some pretension to organisation and pay, but they were few in comparison to the rabble.

The disasters of the Prince seemed now irre-

mediable; he felt sensibly his own rashness, and having acted contrary to advice, he was plunged into profound grief, and seemed ashamed to approach his royal father's camp, to communicate the state of affairs. The Shah at first received the news of the Prince's defeat with great anger. The Prince had grossly committed himself, and he would not permit his approach. But at length relenting towards his favourite son, he sent to invite him to the camp, that he might condole with him, and devise some means of repairing these great disasters. On his arrival, the Shah received him very kindly, and plans for renewing the campaign were arranged.

At length orders were sent to re-assemble the troops in the different stations, and considerable activity was displayed for continuing the war, so far as summoning the governors of provinces for all their resources of men and subsidies. But there was one grand deficiency—that of “the sinews of war,”—the order on the treasury; for although the private treasure of the King was immense,—being estimated at thirty millions sterling, besides incalculable quantities of diamonds and pearls, unknown to any other monarch in the world,—

yet the pay of the army is derived entirely from precarious levies on the people amongst whom they may happen to be. The troops are therefore so ill paid, that the wonder seems to be how they are ever assembled. But to keep them together, particularly under defeat, was beyond the power even of Abbas Meerza himself.

In September, the Shah broke up the campaign near Tabreez, where he remained for a short time only. He soon afterwards returned to Tehran, and the Prince re-assembled the troops collected by the governors of provinces. Thus an army once more showed itself, and he took the command, hoping to retrieve his former disasters.

In the meantime the Sardar of Erivan had not been inactive. This was considered as the strongest fort, and the key to Persia. It was deemed impregnable; and the utmost importance was attached to it by the Persians, to whom it was formerly ceded by the Turks in lieu of Bagdad. The Sardar had many engagements with the Russians, in several of which he met with decided success; but latterly he was obliged to fall back, and General Madodoff made some show of marching upon Erivan. He took up his position at

Aslandoos, and there committed such devastations on the neighbouring villages, as were disgraceful to his country, unworthy the sovereign whom he served, and outraging every feeling of humanity.

The year now drawing to its close, and the season for active warfare being quite at an end, his Royal Highness retired with his ill-organized troops, and busied himself in active operations to renew the campaign in the following spring. In the meantime the Russians were not inactive. From the capital, immense trains of battering artillery were sent down, to commence the siege of Erivan. The new monarch of Russia was anxious to distinguish the commencement of his reign by some success, to wipe out the memory of the late insurrection amongst his nobles, which had well nigh proved fatal to his throne and life. Numerous levies were raised for the army of Persia, and in its ranks were young men of the first nobles, who, having borne a part in this insurrection, were degraded from their rank and fortune to the cartouch-box and the musket. A talented and indefatigable commander, General Paskevitch, was placed at the head of these troops, which were destined to pounce upon Persia with a resistless and merciless force.

On the other hand, the fallen fortunes of Abbas Meerza had so lowered him in the estimation of his troops, that he could by no means keep them together. This is a characteristic trait in the Persian troops. They are active and vigorous in the outset, but when once repulsed they soon become crest-fallen. In addition to this, the want of funds to maintain these troops was one of the leading features of his Royal Highness's disasters; and the English would not assist him, the treaty not conferring upon them sufficient power to do so.

In October this year, 1826, Major Willock was despatched to England with accounts of the success of the Persians against the Russians at the outset of the campaign. Nothing could be more unfortunate for them than this representation, since in reply to their demand for aid, it was said, "You seem to succeed so well, that you cannot want our assistance." This, I understand, was the answer of the British minister to the demand for pecuniary supplies. Nor would the East India Company afford any assistance. The burthen of the war was thus thrown entirely on Abbas Meerza himself, the Shah refusing him any assistance, either in men or money. Had the Shah seen fit to open his coffers, it is probable that the fortunes of the

Prince would have been retrieved; and to the Shah's avarice may, in a great measure, be attributed the present degraded and dependent state of Persia as regards her Russian ally; had he advanced some of his accumulated treasure to the troops who were anxious to enrol themselves in their country's cause, their ancient city of Tabreez would never have been invaded by the Russian troops.

The poor Prince was much to be pitied. Struggling with every difficulty, domestic and foreign, he still strove to support a show of resistance to the encroachment of the Russians. Every thing was done at Tabreez which the indefatigable zeal and activity of his English commander-in-chief, Major Hart, could effect, and which entitled him so truly to the Prince's confidence. A fine regiment of Serbozes, twelve hundred strong, was marched off for Erivan.* Their martial appearance and high state of discipline would have done credit to any service.

On the other hand, the Prince's own immediate

* Major Hart offered his services to take the command of the Prince's troops, but was interdicted from so doing by the British envoy.

troops deserted him; being without clothing or pay, nothing less could be expected of them. The resources of the province were not able to maintain them; and thus, unsupported by the Shah, Abbas Meerza was left alone to bear the brunt of the best disciplined troops of Russia.

Having thus shown the comparative state of affairs in the beginning of the year 1827, the result of the war may be easily anticipated. It no longer became a contest, and at one point only was resistance offered to the advance of the Russians. Erivan being strongly fortified and well garrisoned, the Persian troops here still maintained their character for bravery. Twice were the Russians repulsed outside the walls, with great loss; and it was fully proved, that with equal force and equal military advantages, as regards commanders, discipline, &c., the Persian troops were at least equal in courage and power to the Russians.

It was for some time doubted, by the Russians themselves, whether Erivan would ever fall into their hands. They renewed their efforts, brought an immense train of battering artillery, and scarcely ever did the Russian troops evince so much courage as before this place; but all did not avail, till the

power of gold was added to that of arms. In a word, the then Governor of Erivan, Hussein Khan (the Sardar being at Tabreez), opened the gates to the insidious foe ; and thus, by treachery, this bulwark of Persia, this key of the empire, fell into the hands of the enemy.

So great was the indignation of the Persians against the governor on his surrender of the fortress, that he was obliged to be protected by his new masters, by a special clause in the articles of peace.

Erivan having once fallen, Persia seemed to lay prostrate at the feet of the Autocrat ; but some commotion again in the town indicated an attempt towards its being regained by the Persians. This called back the general-in-chief, Paskevitch, who was then employed before Abersabad, which place was of great consequence, and an Armenian guide had arrived to inform him that there were only twelve thousand men in the town, and that it might be easily taken.

The Prince during this time was at the head of sixteen thousand men, wasting his time in the neighbourhood of Khoie, in occasional skirmishes with the Russians, instead of strengthening his

capital, and cutting off the enemy's retreat; which was then very easy, since there was a detachment of eight thousand Russians at Marand, having strict orders from the general-in-chief not to advance, but to wait his reinforcements.

This detachment having spent eight days at Marand, and seeing nothing of the Persians, the officers held a council of war, and decided on going on, and reconnoitring towards Tabreez; Colonel Espejo, with one brigade only, being the advanced guard. Near a deep ravine in the way they fell in with a party of three thousand Persians, well posted. Having established a battery, they soon dispersed them, and continued their course towards Tabreez, no more troops impeding their progress. On the morning of the 25th of October 1827, the Colonel advanced, with some Cossacks only, to the city, and took quiet possession of it, not the least resistance being offered. The Persian troops had all departed, and their chief, Allaya Khan, was found concealed in a house and taken prisoner.

In the course of the same day the remainder of the Russian troops came up, in number about eight thousand, and immediately took possession

of the Prince's palace, where the work of plunder had begun by his own confidential people, high in rank and office, and the spoliation was only stopped by the timely arrival of the Russians.

Thus fell, by a most singular concurrence of unfortunate circumstances on the part of the Persians, the celebrated city of Tabreez, which, with a comparatively small force, might have baffled the attempts of the enemy; for it is said to possess even stronger means of defence than the city of Erivan.

The gallant Prince Abbas Meerza, deserted by his troops, by his father, and by the British government, could do nothing to stem the torrent of Muscovite invasion. The Russians now made a quiet march through his territories. They advanced upon Khoie, which offered no resistance; the inhabitants of the city invited the Russian general, Penceratoff, to enter it; and he was still there with about eight thousand men when I passed through the place.

The Russian general, with the advanced guard, entered Tabreez soon after Colonel Espejo, as already alluded to. General Paskevitch was well received by the English residents; and, on his

return to Russia, acknowledged their attention by sending them crosses of honour. Some of the officers were of the flower of the Russian nobility, who had been mixed up in the late insurrection, and who, instead of being sent into Siberia, were drafted into the army of Persia. Amongst them was their celebrated poet, Pustchin, who was called the "Byron of Russia."

The entrance of the invading army into Tabreez caused very little sensation in the city, the inhabitants continuing their usual quiet round of social occupations. The Prince, at the time, was but a short distance off, with about three thousand troops: finding it impossible to oppose the Russian forces, he had kept in their rear. A British officer was deputed to inform him of the disastrous event. The Prince received the intelligence with much emotion, and seemed bitterly afflicted, the more so, that the circumstance was quite unexpected by him.

General Paskevitch took up his residence in the Prince's palace. The troops were encamped outside the town, in number about fourteen thousand, with a park of artillery of a hundred and four guns; and they remained under canvass during

the inclemencies of the winter. The greatest order prevailed for an invading army. The Persians made no complaints of injustice or aggression; but I should observe, that many private assassinations of the Russians took place, which they most assiduously concealed. This proves that, amongst the lower orders, their external cordiality with the invaders was more a matter of policy than of feeling.

The British envoy was not at Tabreez when the Russians entered the city; but General Paskevitch immediately paid his respects to his lady, and sent a guard of honour to her residence.

I have mentioned how quietly the Persians received their invaders; I will now refer to what the invaders themselves said of the events in the Petersburg Gazette. It was there stated that the strong city of Tauris was taken, after an obstinate defence, but that nothing could impede the ardour of his Imperial Majesty's troops; that they took numerous stands of colours, and that the governor at length presented the general with the keys of the city!

The colours here referred to were sent to Russia, to be paraded, and to have the Te Deum

sung over them. But I believe the following fact regarding them may be strictly relied upon:—The colours were manufactured in the bazaars a long time after the arrival of the Russians, and were well perforated with bullet-holes. The keys were also made for the occasion by M. A. Khan, with special orders that they might look as old as possible. They were *fifteen* in number, although there were only eight gates. So much for Russian gazettes!

The Russian officers mixed amongst their new friends the British with the utmost cordiality. It looked more like a visit of courtesy than a visit of war; parties were formed every evening, and it proved the gayest season ever known at Tabreez amongst the English residents.*

* I am very cautious in advancing any strong facts on Persian authorities; but my information on this point was derived from the British residents at Tabreez, and confirmed by the Russian colonel, Espejo himself, who related it to me. The copy from the St. Petersburg Gazette I made myself; and the colours I subsequently saw in the Kremlin at Moscow, of which there were eight stands pointed out to me as "taken by the Count d'Ervansky at the siege of Tauris."

CHAPTER X.

**OF THE LATE TREATY OF PEACE BETWEEN
PERSIA AND RUSSIA.**

HAVING cursorily glanced at the events of the late war between Russia and Persia, I will briefly revert to the treaty of peace, which was to establish everlasting friendship between the two nations. As it is rather lengthy, I will merely transcribe a few of the leading articles, which bear upon the actual political position of Persia, as regards Russia.

The treaty begins—as most of those documents do—by invoking the name of the Most High to witness professions of unaltered friendship, that are to be broken only at the first convenient season. The Count d'Erivansky (General Paskevitch) was

the Russian plenipotentiary, and Abbas Meerza, on the part of the Shah, deputed Colonel Macdonald to act for him, and at the obscure village of Tourkamanchai was this important affair settled. The third article cedes, on the part of the Shah, as well as for his heirs and successors, to the empire of Russia the khanats of Erivan and of Natchivan, to be given up to the Russian authorities in six months. The fourth article refers to the line of demarcation to establish a new frontier for the two states, the principal basis of which is, "the countries within the rivers whose waters run towards the Caspian, belong to Russia; and those whose waters run on the side of Persia, belong to Persia." The sixth article refers to the pecuniary indemnity which Russia claims for the expenses of the war, the arrangement of which is referred to a future article.

The seventh article of this treaty was important to the Prince; I therefore give the whole of it:—
"His Majesty the Shah of Persia having seen fit to designate for his successor and heir Abbas Meerza, his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, as well to give to his Majesty the Shah of Persia a personal testimony of his amicable dispo-

sition, and of his desire to contribute to the consolidation of that order of succession, engages to recognise from this day, in the august person of his Royal Highness Abbas Meerza, the successor and heir-presumptive of the crown of Persia, and to consider him as legitimate sovereign of the kingdom, on his accession to the throne."

The eighth article guarantees to Russia the right of navigation on the Caspian Sea, to the exclusion of ships of war of any other power whatsoever. The tenth article refers to the establishment of commercial relations, not laying down the terms of the tariff, but with respect to the reception and establishment of consuls in the different ports. The twelfth article provides for the personal safety of the traitorous governor of Erivan, Hussein Khan, and his brother, Hassan Khan, and Kerim Khan, formerly governor of Natchivan. This is the strongest proof of their treachery. The thirteenth article refers to the exchange of prisoners. The fifteenth article grants, by the Shah, a complete amnesty to all the inhabitants of Azerbaijan, for their opinions and conduct toward the Russians during their temporary occupation of the said province, with permission freely to transport their

families from the Persian into the Russian states. This stipulation holds good for one year from the date of the treaty, and expired on the 22nd of February, 1829.

This was the article alluded to by the Prince, when I had the honour of an audience with him. It had reference particularly to the Armenians, who were decoyed by the Russians in shoals from the Persian territory. I have seen districts depopulated in this way, particularly in the neighbourhood of Khoie; and thousands of them, I understand, found an early grave in Russia. Nothing grieved Abbas Meerza more than to see so many valuable "rayats," or tributary subjects, leaving their native soil, which had been manured with their industry, and rendered flourishing by their occupancy. The Armenian villages were always the most flourishing, and yielded much greater revenues than the Persian villages. One of the objects of the war, on the part of Russia, seems to have been that of acquiring population, their greediness after which was one of the causes of the massacre of their ambassador, as already related. On their part, they threw every obstacle in the way to the return of the Persians to their native

country. This was particularly the case from Georgia, and caused the Prince to remark to me, "that the obligation had not been reciprocally observed by the Russians."

The sixteenth article provides for the immediate cessation of hostilities, and that the official ratifications, with the proper signatures, shall be exchanged within four months from the date of the treaty.*

The pecuniary considerations to the Russians were seven crores of tomauns down (about three millions and a half sterling). This was immediately paid by the King. One crore of tomauns to be paid by the Prince in six months, as a guarantee for which they were to retain the town of Khoie, and two more crores of tomauns at some indefinite period, no security being required for this payment. Fifteen crores were first demanded. The payment of the eighth crore of tomauns came on during my being at Tabreez. With an exhausted treasury, the Prince found it impossible to answer it, and he applied to the Shah for assistance through one of the gentlemen of the British mission. The Shah granted him 100,000 tomauns, on the security of the applicant. Subsequently, he took down to

* Done at the village of Tourkamanchai, the 10th February, 1826, and the 5th of Sharbone, of the Hegira 1243.

the King the Prince's and the Kaimacan's receipts, in order to take up his own; but he refused to exchange them, saying, that "the one was the bond of an Englishman, whom he could trust; the other he could place no confidence in"—a pretty compliment this to his "auspicious and blessed son!"

In his subsequent difficulties, the Prince had also recourse to Major Hart for his assistance, who went to Maroga to meet him; and he acknowledged how greatly he was indebted to him for his interference. What with the Major's guarantee, and the Prince's jewels pawned to the Russians, the sum was in great part, though not wholly, made up. Thus the royal debtor was relieved from his dilemma chiefly by British aid and British credit. The Prince stripped himself of every external tinsel of royalty, even to his chair of state, an old-fashioned, huge-back, uncomfortable fabric. This, with a gold ewer and basin, and a pair of candlesticks, were taken by the Russians for thirty thousand tomauns, to be broken up for the gold which they contained. The Persian jewels pledged to the Russians consisted of a splendid gold girdle, about eight inches wide, containing diamonds, emeralds, and large rubies, valued by the Persians at 130,000 tomauns, and taken by the Russians in

pledge at 80,000 tomauns; a dagger covered with diamonds, taken in pledge at 7367 tomauns, and a star of the same materials. It was even said that the Prince was so desperately driven, as to take the rings off his wives' fingers. I can only say that I did not see them, but the other things I *did* see at the ark, or arsenal, which was the place of deposit between Persia and Russia.

With the concoction of this treaty, as I have already stated, the British Elchee, Sir John Macdonald Kennier, had a great deal to do; and he was deemed a very able diplomatist likewise in getting cancelled an existing treaty of subsidy between the Honourable Company and Persia, for which the Prince's necessities obliged him to take the *douceur* offered of 200,000 tomauns. I heard that this negotiation had given great satisfaction to the divan in Leadenhall Street, their sense of which, as I have already stated, was conveyed to the envoy.

On my arrival at Tabreez, not a tomaun was to be found in the baznars. Those who had any were afraid to avow it, lest they might be called upon to aid the necessities of the government. Those who had none, if they possessed any credit

at al., were required to subscribe that credit to a certain amount, for a future payment. Had not the ill-timed parsimony of the divan in Leadenhall Street interfered, there is no doubt that the Prince might have retrieved his disasters with Russia, as in Persia every thing is to be done with money. To dispute the terms of the British treaty at such a moment, and to withhold their aid from a faithful ally, was unworthy that honourable Company of merchants, whose navies ride the seas, and whose armies are second only to the Wellington legions. Their subsequent purchase of the obligations of the treaty is a tacit acknowledgment of this.

The consequences of Persia being thus prostrated at the feet of Russia are notorious, not only in the supremacy of Russian influence, but the entire downfall of that of England, whose mission has been driven from the soil, their commerce left unprotected, and only three Englishmen at the present moment are to be found where so lately British influence prevailed. From the long suspended intercourse between England and Persia, it may be feared whether it can be ever cordially renewed.

It must be admitted that the Russians managed to wind up this war with an admirable tact, not only having subdued the Persians, made them pay all the expenses of the war, and annexed to their empire some fine slices of Persian territory, but converting them into zealous allies, who hugged the chains thrown over them. Such is the Persian character. They may be beaten into friendship, or rather into fear. What powder and shot failed to effect, was subsequently done by diplomacy, and by that corrupting power of gold, of which the Russians are so prodigal.*

* If it be not diverging too much from my subject, I may be allowed to say that I have often had occasion to notice not only the consummate ability, but the extraordinary success which mark all the Russian tactics, military as well as diplomatic, in the East. In the latter they have confessedly the best of Downing Street. Of the former I am not so competent to judge; but travelling as I have with the Russian troops, having visited their camps, attended their military fêtes, and their splendid reviews in the "Champs de Mars," where their lines were walls of brass, their squares moving towers, I am a little tainted with the belief in Russian military supremacy. The Prince Galitzen once said to me at Erroume, "We make war, and you pay for it"—alluding to the Stock Exchange aid. He added, "What you English gain in the field you lose in the cabinet." In their two Asiatic wars, so admirably planned and so happily executed, it must be admitted that they have shown consummate tact, not merely outwitting Asiatic, but even European diplomacy. Their success is obviously owing to great

The Russian influence at Tabreez was evinced during my stay there. On the 6th of December, the news of the capture of Varna was officially announced by the Russian minister to Abbas Meerza. Mr. Grybydoff then ordered the Armenians to sing *Te Deum* in their church, which he attended with all his *cortège*, to return thanks for the success of the Emperor's arms. The Prince, in compliment to the event, invited the minister to dine with him. The dinner took place, and

liberality in the payment of their officials. Home and foreign talent brings a high price in the Russian market, and they have great discrimination in the employment of that talent. Two German counts have the leading portfolios of the cabinet, and by long continuance in office, there is no vacillation in Russian politics. The wary game is continued perseveringly; and it may be said that, for foreign diplomacy, a despotic government is much more efficient than a representative one.

In Russia, the diplomatists are trained by education and by travel for their particular department: diplomacy is as much a profession in that country as medicine and law; and they have a great facility in acquiring languages. The appointments in Russia of ambassadors, or even consuls, never emanate from family connections, the sole question is, who can serve the Emperor best? Fidelity and talent are sure to meet with splendid rewards. There is a warmth of nationality about the Russians, a loyalty which converts their Emperor into an idol; no pitiful party lickerings; no expending those energies which should be directed to their country's weal in personal wranglings and party strife; their principle is that of co-operation for the service of their country, their Emperor, and their God.

only five persons attended—all of them Russians. The British Minister and his suite were invited, but they declined thus publicly to celebrate the triumph of the Russians over the British allies—the Turks. I heard that the entertainment was a heavy affair, and that the Prince's courtesy partook more of the constrained than the voluntary quality. Some fireworks announced to the public that the entertainment was going on, and at the signal of the firing of a gun, the Russian minister handed to the Prince an order for the immediate evacuation of Khoie by the Russian troops—that place being held in pledge for the payment of the eighth crore of tomauns, and which payment, as I have already shewn, had been cancelled; but the order was never respected nor acted upon.

A few days afterwards the Prince gave another dinner to the British envoy and part of his suite. There were five gentlemen present, and it is said that they were more sumptuously entertained than were the Russians. The Prince was shortly afterwards invited by the Russian minister, by orders from his court, to visit their capital, it being intimated to him that, by this visit, he would be excused from paying the remaining two crores of

tomauns which lay over to an indefinite period. The disposition of the Prince towards this visit was never publicly known; but certain it is that great preparations were making for the journey, and that the King strongly urged him to hasten his departure. The financial supply was the only difficulty, and it was rumoured that his Majesty had sent the Prince 30,000 tomauns to pay his expenses. It was stated that the Prince was to go from St. Petersburg to London, and that the English envoy had advised the proper authorities, in order that he might be respectfully invited. In the meanwhile that dreadful catastrophe occurred which has been related in a former chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT
BRITAIN AND PERSIA.

I WILL here venture on a very slight retrospect of the political relations between Great Britain and Persia during the last forty years, previous to which time they were not deemed to be of much importance. It may be considered as rather tender ground to go over, particularly as I have never been summoned to the council board, nor permitted even to approach the vestibule of their deliberations: and I was often amused at Tabreez at the profound mystification attending those deliberations, which were soon after so freely discussed by the Persians publicly, who have no sort of objection to make known their cabinet in'en-

tions; indeed, it is probable that the Grand Vizier himself, when he sits under the shaving operations of the "dellok," or barber, relates to him, in the course of common conversation, the discussions of the last privy council.

Tabreez, although only a local government, had all the importance attached to it of being the grand focus of European diplomacy. The Shah had deputed Abbas Meerza to this department of the state; the English and Russian envoys were residing at this court, and all business relating to Ferengestan was here transacted.

In the year 1800, during the enlightened and vigorous administration of the then Governor-general of India, the Marquis Wellesley, Captain John Malcolm was sent as envoy to the Persian court, with which he concluded a treaty of amity, and an engagement on the part of the Persians to send twenty thousand men to attack some Afghan tribes, bordering the Honorable Company's territories.

The great Napoleon, too, even amidst the mighty toils of European warfare, did not overlook the importance of cultivating an alliance with Persia, with the view, probably, of opening to himself a

way to British India. This was in consequence of an invitation from the Persian court, who sent an envoy, Meerza Reza, to Buonaparte, and he answered it by sending a large embassy, confided to General Gardine, in the capacity of envoy extraordinary, to undermine, if possible, the British influence. This mission met with the greatest respect from the court of Tehran; the King conferred the order of the Lion and Sun on the ambassador.* The mission excited great alarm in the government of India, and the French interests were now rapidly increasing, although in the treaty alluded to was this clause, "And should ever any person of the French nation attempt to pass your ports or boundaries, or desire to establish themselves either on the shores or frontiers, you are to take means to expel and extirpate them, and never to allow them to obtain a footing in any place, and you are at full liberty and authorised to disgrace and slay them."

The Governor-general thought it necessary to meet this vacillation of the Persian court with

* The French first appeared in Persia in 1665, and concluded a treaty with the Shah in 1674. A splendid mission was sent by Shah Sultan Hussein to Louis XIV., in relation to a trade with France over the Caspian.

menace, and accordingly prepared at Bombay an expedition of ten thousand men to act against Persia. She began to arm her frontiers, and to make preparations, as though intending to resist force by force; but she soon declined the task, and sent a plenipotentiary to India, offering to expel the French mission from Tehran.* This was hastened by her being attacked at the same time by the Russians on her northern frontiers. She likewise offered to subsidise any number of British troops to aid her against the enemy.

Sir John Malcolm was immediately dispatched again from India; but in the meantime another British mission just then made its appearance in Persia from England, headed by Sir Harford Jones, who reached Tehran February 14, 1809, thus superseding Sir John Malcolm, who for some time remained at Bushire. Sir Harford was empowered to enter into a treaty, engaging the East India Company to pay to Persia a subsidy of two hundred thousand tomauns annually, and to send her free of expense as many British officers and troops as she might require, to expel the invaders

* The ambassador was Hudji Kelel Khan, who was unfortunately killed in a fray at Bombay, as referred to by his Majesty in his letter to Abbas Meerza.

from her northern frontiers. This treaty bears date the 12th March, 1809.

What was the surprise of these two envoys, meeting on the same ground at Youjon: the first coming to treat for the Persians subsidising the British troops, the second offering them troops free of expense, and a liberal subsidy besides! These were seeming inconsistencies between the British envoys, amongst whom differences arose, and Sir John Malcolm returned immediately to India; but Sir Harford Jones remained in Persia three years, where he was highly respected, and his name is still in great repute, both with the Prince and the Shah.

It is easy to anticipate which envoy met with the most courteous reception at the court of Tebran. The treaty of Sir Harford Jones was accepted by the Persian government, and they sent an ambassador, Abul Hassan Khan, to England to obtain ratification of the treaty. This was in July, 1809, and the envoy was accompanied by Mr. Morier.

In 1810, Sir John Malcolm proceeded again to Tehran, where he was most graciously received by the King, who did not fail to notice the former meeting of the two ambassadors, so unexpected to

each other, saying, "the difficulties in his last mission were not occasioned by his Majesty." A treaty was now formed of a commercial nature. Sir John was a great favourite with the King, who invested him with the order of the Lion and Sun, and made him a Khan, and presented him with a diamond star, himself pinning it on his coat, good-humouredly saying, "the King does not understand this business."

In 1811 another mission was dispatched by the British court, having still more external pomp and consequence attached to it. Sir Gore Ouseley was sent out as ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, accompanied by Major D'Arcy and another British officer, who arrived in Persia with detachments of artillery, &c. &c. At this period the war still continued with Russia, who had possessed herself of some fine provinces, and was making rapid strides upon the Persian territories, holding Lankaran, Karabaugh, &c.

France was at this time in alliance with Russia, which prevented her acting upon the treaty entered into by General Gardine, to supply Persia with a quota of troops. To this circumstance, perhaps, might be attributed the subsequent extirpation of

the French interests in this part of the world. At this time the Persian troops were in the most wretched state of discipline, with but little of artillery, magazine stores, or any thing which constituted the *matériel* of an army. The British officers having begun to effect reformation in this badly organised corps, Sir Gore Ouseley began his work to reform, if possible, the late treaty entered into by Sir Harford Jones, that the expenses of the East India Company might be materially reduced; altering the rank and pay in the subsidy of the Persian troops, in a way very offensive to the government, and they positively refused to accede to such alterations.

Whilst these negotiations were pending, the army of the Prince Royal attacked the Russians at Sultonbond.

Here fell the gallant Colonel Christie, who it is said anticipated and predicted his death.* Though the warfare was not on behalf of his country's cause, he engaged in it with that ardour which is ever the characteristic of the British soldier. The result of this attack was very unfavourable to the

* On crossing the Aras to join the Persian troops, he fell into the ambuscade of the enemy and was sacrificed, a martyr to his zeal and indiscretion.

Persian troops, which induced the Shah to sign the new treaty with Sir Gore Ouseley.

Just at this period a courier arrived announcing peace between Great Britain and Russia. This compelled Persia to make peace with the latter power; and on the 14th March 1812, she signed a treaty, under the mediation of the British government, yielding to Russia, Mongrelia and other territories as far as Astrachan. The most mortifying part of this treaty was, renouncing the right of navigation on the Caspian, even for a boat, and giving up those fine provinces, the neighbourhood of which abounds with forests of navy timber, the whole of which are now in possession of Russia.

In May 1814, Sir Gore Ouseley took leave of the Persian court, and left in charge of British affairs Mr. Morier, who was some time after joined by Mr. Ellis, bringing with him instructions to cut off the British subsidy and every expense attached to England. This excited not only the surprise but the indignation of the Shah and his ministers, since it was said to be *contrary to Sir Gore's assurance*, and immediately the former ambassador was dispatched to England, Meerza Abul Hassan Khan, when the British cabinet agreed that one hundred thousand

tomauns, being six months arrear of the subsidy, should be immediately paid by the East India Company.

The Persians complained of a violation of the terms of treaty, in consequence of Messrs. Morier and Ellis ordering all the non-commissioned officers to leave Persia on the first of January following, although they were entitled to pay whether they remained in Persia or in India. This seems to have been an ill-timed economy, which being persisted in, the Prince resolved to procure French officers to replace them. This plan was afterwards abandoned, on Colonel D'Arcy's taking upon himself the charge of some Persian youths, to give them a liberal education in England. The Colonel for some time declined this; but he saw no alternative, and that he should seriously offend the Prince by a refusal. They accordingly proceeded to England by way of Russia.

Messrs. Morier and Ellis now quitted Tehran, and British affairs fell into the hands of Major Willock, who had formerly acted as aide-de-camp to Sir Gore Ouseley; and from that time British influence and power appeared to decline, as subsequent events fully proved. This was principally

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government appear to have thought Persia of little importance with regard to political relations. The Russians thought otherwise, and did their utmost to establish friendly relations with this country. The consequence was an uninterrupted and almost exclusive supply of her manufactures; the bazaars were filled with them, and caravans pouring down from Georgia almost weekly, gorged the markets with her fabrics, which, to the amount of half a million sterling, were imported there annually.

General Yermoloff concluded a treaty with the court of Tehran, political and commercial, highly advantageous to Russia, and left in charge of Russian affairs Colonel Muzzaravich, who was much liked amongst the Persians for his liberal expenditure and conciliating address.

Russia having now conquered in the cabinet as well as in the field, thought only of augmenting her armies on her newly-acquired frontiers, and the answer given to an enquiry was, that "the Persians must submit to the dictation of Russia with respect to a successor to the throne on the death of Futteh Ali, the present Shah." This seemed like opening the leaf of future intentions;

owing, I believe, to the inferior rank of the envoy, who was deemed "a third class diplomat."

Russia, after her strides of conquest in the field, began likewise to stride in the Persian cabinet. She looked forward to the annexation of Persia to her already enormous territory; and with the "telescopic eye" of anticipation India was almost to be seen in the back-ground.

In 1817, the Russian influence supplanted entirely that of the British, and a splendid mission was sent by the court of St. Petersburg, headed by General Yermoloff, the governor of Georgia, as ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from his Imperial Majesty the Autocrat of all the Russias. Unusual magnificence and splendour marked this mission, which dazzled the eyes of the Persians; but what glittered the most were the brilliant presents, amongst others a *glass bed*. You can, in fact, do nothing with the Persians without presents, and almost every thing *with* them. One may easily imagine how the King's eyes glistened as he surveyed the services of cut glass and porcelain, the diamond plumes, snuff-boxes, rings, &c.

From the period of this mission, the British

government appear to have thought Persia of little importance with regard to political relations. The Russians thought otherwise, and did their utmost to establish friendly relations with this country. The consequence was an uninterrupted and almost exclusive supply of her manufactures; the bazaars were filled with them, and caravans pouring down from Georgia almost weekly, gorged the markets with her fabrics, which, to the amount of half a million sterling, were imported there annually.

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but apparently it excited no attention on the part of the British resident, who, from his opposition to the wishes of the Prince Royal, made himself personally obnoxious, and occasioned comparisons to the disadvantage of himself and the British interests.

At length serious differences arose between them, about the payment of the arrears of the subsidy already alluded to, which the Shah had transferred to his son Abbas Meerza, and on account of it Major Willock had advanced him the sum of ten thousand tomanus; but a subsequent order which the Prince gave upon him he chose to dishonour, alleging to the Kaimacan (or prime minister) a breach of faith on the part of Persia in entering the Turkish territory, contrary to their promise to him. This gave great offence to the Kaimacan and the Prince; they denied the charge, and said that such a complaint came with very ill grace from Major Willock, who had never interposed amidst all the insults which they had received from the Turkish commanders.

This affair increased the Shah's suspicions formerly entertained, that the delay in fulfilling the engagement of the British government was solely

due to their *chargé-d'affaires*, and in a moment of irritation he forced the payment from his minister, Meerza Abul Hassan Khan, by whose embassy to the court of St. James's that engagement had been entered into. The Shah sent Aga Mahomed Kerreem to Major Willock to insist on payment of the Prince's order, who told the British *chargé* (but without the sanction of the King) that if the money was not paid in five days, he had the Shah's command to cut off his head.

The *chargé* immediately taking alarm hastened to the frontiers. The Shah assured him (and under his own seal) that nothing of the sort was intended; he made a public apology to him for the conduct of his messenger, and condescended to pay him every mark of kindness to regain his confidence. The ministers made their explanations to him, but nothing would tempt the *chargé* back. His imagination was constantly haunted with the spectre of the "*Ferusha Ghuzzub*," or executioner.

Being frightened from his post, Major Willock hastened to London, although the Shah informed him that if he left the court unpleasantly, or contrary to his wishes, Persia would feel it essential to her dignity to dispatch an envoy to England

with a report of the chargé's offensive conduct, and to require the appointment of another person in his stead.

To the British minister for foreign affairs (the late Lord Londonderry) Major Willock made his complaint;—whose reply was—"The treatment you have met with by no means authorized you to leave your post. In four days prepare to return to Tehran. (Such is my Treasury minute.)"

Within that time the minister was no more, and his successor, Mr. Canning, said he would not be troubled with Persian affairs, and transferred them over to the East India Company.

Meerza Saulaeh, the envoy from the Persian court, then arrived in London, and made his representation of the conduct of Major Willock. The consequence was, that it was determined to make some new appointment to the court of Tehran. This being now vested in the East India Company, a mission was prepared by them, appointing Colonel Macdonald Kennier as agent or representative of the Honourable Company, but not accredited as an ambassador from his Britannic Majesty.

In this capacity the King for a long time refused

to receive the mission. It was beneath his dignity to entertain an envoy from a company of merchants; but they having paid over the arrears of the subsidy, and Abbas Meerza being influenced by the generalissimo of his forces, whose opinion he much respected, advised the Shah to receive the mission, and in the early part of 1826, he dispatched a distinguished messenger to India, inviting them to come up.

On the arrival of the Colonel in September, the King was then in camp, to which he went, and was received very graciously on the 7th, the Shah observing that "his place had long been empty." As usual, the presents were displayed, and these are ample credentials at the Persian court.

Nothing that I am aware of disturbed the good understanding between the envoy and the court, with which he was a favourite, and particularly since by his mediation the peace was brought about with Russia, though on terms very disadvantageous to Persia, yet better than was at the moment anticipated.*

The treaty formerly alluded to as entered into by Sir Harford Jones, to pay two hundred thousand

* For an account of the Colonel's death, see Chapter 7.

tomans annually to extirpate the French interests from Persia, was considered at an end when the danger was removed; but a clause was attached to it of renewal in case the Persians were attacked by the Russians. The result of the late war with that country occasioned much discussion respecting this clause: the English declaring that, as the war was begun by Persia, no subsidy could be claimed by them; and the latter arguing that they were still entitled to their pecuniary claim. This difference at the time materially weakened the British interests at the court of Tabreez, where money was so greatly needed.

At the death of Sir John Macdonald Kennier, in the month of June, 1830, Captain Campbell was left in charge of Persian affairs, and on the 25th March, 1832, he received from India his regular appointment of envoy to the court of Tehran, to which city he proceeded, and occupied the British residency.

Persian political events now became stirring and interesting. The declining health of the Shah gave great inquietude to thinking men, since apparently the quiet and welfare of the country depended on the precarious tenure of his existence. The

heir-apparent, Mahomed Meerza, who had been appointed by the Shah as his successor to the throne, and acknowledged as such by the British and Russian courts, was now hastening from Khorassan at the head of his army, to assert his right, and had arrived at Tabreez to resume the government of Azerbijan. Already were the rival chiefs preparing themselves to buckle on the armour of warfare. The Governor of Shirauz even refused to pay up the arrears of the "tribute" money, which so incensed the old Shah, that it seemed to have lent him new vigour; the scent of gold, even at a distance, gave him new life as it were. He summoned a large army, placed himself at the head of it, and marched towards Shirauz, threatening vengeance on his contumacious son. Arrived at Isfahan (as already stated), there he terminated his mortal career, on the 24th October, 1834, after a prosperous reign of thirty-five years, and in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

Immediately the Zil y Sultaun, the eldest son, and only brother of the late Abbas Meerza, and formerly the shadow of the Shah (which his title denotes), proclaimed himself as the substance, and nothing less, than "the King of Kings;" at

the same time possessing himself of the treasury. This latter was the most effective step to empire, since, as I have shown, money will do all things in Persia. With it he found no difficulty to establish his authority in the capital, where it was universally acknowledged. But, as is the case in most Eastern successions, rival candidates started up to dispute with him the possession of the throne. There was one at Shirauz, Hussein Ali Meerza; another in the person of the Firman Firmace, or Governor of Fars, who was crowned as Hoosein Shah.

Thus Persia became a prey to intestine disorders; but they did not last long. When the death of the Shah was announced at Tabreez, his appointed successor was proclaimed Mahomed Shah, on the 9th of November, and acknowledged as such by the ambassadors of England and Russia. Immediately every effort was made to put an army in motion, that he might proceed to the capital, and take possession of the throne of his ancestors; but the stamina of its existence was wanting—money—the treasury was empty, and there were no means of raising supplies. The evil genius of the Kaimacan was

for a time in the ascendant, every thing was paralyzed.

What Persia could not do for herself, her faithful ally, Great Britain, did for her.* Sir John Campbell, with an energy which was scarcely to be exceeded had it been to gain an empire for himself and heirs, gave an impetus to the proceedings of the Shah. He advanced him immediately £20,000 on the credit of his government; he personally attended at the arsenal to hasten the completion of the guns; he inspected the serbozes, paid the men three tomauns each, promising them their arrears on arrival at Tehran; in fact, it might have been almost imagined that he was going to supplant the Shah himself, such was his activity.

The Shah on the second day of his reign, at the lucky hour appointed by the astrologers, departed towards the capital, establishing himself in a garden not far from the city. Here he assembled the troops, and promised them every thing they

* The troops were in arrears three years' pay, nor would they march until some money was advanced to them, there was at the time a respectable army at Khor, orders for which were immediately sent off, and on the 15th they arrived, commanded by the Amerr y Nizam.

could want on arrival at Tehran, plenty of fine words but no "siller." Sir John, however, had set them in movement, as already alluded to.

Sir Henry Bethune took the lead, commanding the troops, and on the 23d November they finally quitted Tabreez; the Shah now proceeded, accompanied by the English and Russian ambassadors. On arrival at Kasvine, intelligence was received that the troops of the Tehran Shah were marching in great force to oppose the Tabreez Shah, commanded by Eman Nadir Meerza. The advanced guard of each army had some skirmishes, which terminated always in favour of the forces of the latter. The King sent on a large force, attended by ten pieces of artillery.

A letter was forwarded from the real Shah to his rival, promising him immunity for his rebellion, provided he immediately surrendered up himself, guaranteeing to him his eyes, amongst other advantages; and to confirm this guarantee, it was signed by the two ambassadors. Immediately the King with his forces marched on, and his cause was strengthened by the adherence to it of two of the ministers of the late Shah, the Mootimet u Doulut, and the Asseff u Doulut. But Sir

John Campbell had proceeded with the British commander, to exert his influence amongst the chiefs of the usurper's army, and to try what he could do with the commander himself. He succeeded in weaning many of the troops, and their commander seeing them desert, came in on the 17th to make his submission, and to negotiate for his brother, for whom having made capital terms, he proceeded to Tehran, bearing a firmaun to the usurper, that "he must abstain from plundering the royal treasury, that his offences should be pardoned, and that he should be continued as governor of Tehran." But in the meantime he had been arrested, and for safe custody delivered over to the ladies of the harem.

The King arrived on the plains of Tehran on the 20th December; here he reviewed the troops, gave them a plenty of the "chum y chum," or compliments, as to their zeal and activity, how he meant to reward them, &c. On the way he was greeted by his loyal subjects with the sacrifices of camels, sheep, and oxen, being slain before him; scattering sweetmeats, flowers, and other oriental offerings; breaking bottles filled with liqueurs, &c. The following morning, at

six o'clock, was the propitious hour fixed on by the astrologers for his Majesty's happy entry into Tehran.

The Shah, with all the "pomp and circumstance" of oriental parade, mounted on a splendid charger, richly caparisoned, attended by the two ambassadors and their suite, surrounded by the khans and dignitaries of his court, with the many "shah zadehs," or princes, in their splendid costumes; the chiefs of the different tribes; the Koords, with their flaunting finery, and their silk streamers; the Eeleauts, curvetting on their small steeds, and the gaping crowds, bending lowly to the passing dignity of majesty. It is described as a fine oriental scene, and the bright rays of the morning sun threw a brilliance over the whole, which seemed to gladden the march of the young Shah.

On arrival at the palace, his Majesty retired for a short time to robe himself, and shortly returned to give audience to his admiring subjects, the foreign ambassadors, &c. When the ceremonies were all arranged, the ministers were introduced, and on the chair of state, with his crown on, and adorned with all the costliness of the Persian

jewellery, sat the newly enthroned monarch, "the asylum of the universe," &c., and every one bowed before him. The ambassadors being now ordered to be seated, offered the sweet incense of their congratulations, as did also the grandees of the empire, and on the part of the people a salute of one hundred and one guns was fired. His Majesty then made a long and most gracious speech, addressing himself to the two ambassadors, thanking them for the trouble which they had taken, and particularly addressing himself to Sir John Campbell, calling him his friend, saying that he was indebted to him for his crown, &c. After some forms gone through the audience closed, and the assembly departed.

The ceremony of the coronation did not take place until the 28th of December, in the meanwhile every thing remained tranquil; the troops would occasionally give angry indications of the want of pay, but these were soon silenced. On this day Tehran showed unusual bustle and activity, all the respectable inhabitants were thronging towards the great "Maidan;" the grandees and princes were assembled in the court of the Mirror Palace; the latter in their splendid dresses shone

brilliantly in the gorgeous display; the ambassadors were present, and every thing conspired to give *éclat* to the crowning scene. His Majesty having mounted the throne, this was announced by a salute of one hundred and one guns from the "zambrook," artillery.*

The King gave two whiffs from his splendid "kalleoon;" the coronation prayer was then offered by the moolah, who proclaimed him as "Shah Mahmoud Padi Shah of all Persia;" invoking the blessings of heaven upon him, complimenting his Majesty on being called upon to reign over the greatest empire in the world, the most renowned for its antiquity, and for the unchangeableness of its laws and customs, &c. Whenever the name of the Shah was pronounced all persons bowed profoundly to the Zil Allum, or shadow of God. The King replied briefly, in which he promised to govern by the laws established, &c. The ceremony was short, the assembly dispersed, and soon after the King gave private audience to the two ambassadors, in which he again expressed how much he was indebted to Sir John Campbell

* The marble throne I have already described, with its exquisite sculpture of unmeaning figures. (See Chapter 13.)

for his exertions, adding familiarly, "the English are fine fellows."

The other competitors to the throne were soon after silenced. The Zil u Sultaun had reigned only thirty-five days, but the Firman Firmace did not so soon give up, having been crowned as Hoosein Shah ; his party was strengthened by the adherence to him of the Sheik ul Islam, or the chief of the priesthood, and the Ameen u Doulut, or prime minister of the late King.

A force of about two thousand troops and sixteen guns was got ready in about a month, under the orders of Sir H. Bethune, to take possession of Ispahan. By making a forced march, the English general arrived in that city in time to save the governor, against whom the people had risen in rebellion. In the meantime a large force was said to be advancing from Shirauz, headed by Hussein Ali Meerza, one of the candidates for empire, who had joined the "Firman Firmace." The general advanced to meet them, and contriving to get between the troops and their baggage, he defeated the former and captured the latter. This intelligence reaching Shirauz, Hoosein Shah determined to make a last struggle for empire.

Assisted by his sons, Reza Koolie Meerza, Nejef Koolie Meerza, and Timour Meerza, they made a desperate attempt to establish their authority amongst the Shirauzees, in which they failed, after some gallant fighting. The father was taken prisoner, and died shortly after of an attack of cholera. The sons escaped, and subsequently made their way to England, to seek redress and assistance from the British government, by whom they were hospitably entertained, and sent back to Constantinople at their expense.* The troops then made their way to Shirauz, where the advanced guard, under Colonel Shee, made the two brothers, Hoosein and Hassan Ali Meerzas, prisoners.

Thus ended the civil strife which placed on the throne of Persia Mahmoud Shah, the acknowledged and legitimate successor of his grandfather. There were some minor actors in the drama: two brothers of the Shah, Khosroo Meerza and Jehan

* I met these princes, on their return to the East, at Gallaz, and voyaged with them by the Danube to Constantinople. Their reminiscences of their English visit were exceedingly entertaining, their prevalent desire being for an early return to this country. I have heard that they are pensioners on the British government to the amount of £2000; but I can by no means guarantee this information.

Ghyr Meerza, of whose exploits I know nothing, except that it led to their being deprived of their eyes, which I learnt on my last visit to Persia, in 1836.

The strictest concord was observed by the two ambassadors of England and Russia during these events, from the identity of interests of the two countries, their policy securing the tranquillity of Persia under the sceptre of a prince whom their respective governments had formerly acknowledged. But subsequent events have led to an estrangement between Great Britain and Persia, which may be much to be lamented and difficult to reconcile. These I will very briefly revert to. Having never approached even to the vestibule of Downing Street, I cannot stand charged with betraying any of their secrets; but how far I may have penetrated into a Persian divan is known only to myself. Sir John Campbell returned from Persia; Mr. Hume lauded him in the Commons, and Lord Palmerston recalled him!

A mission was now on the "tapis" of congratulation to the Shah of Persia. In the meantime how Great Britain was represented at that court I could never find out, since Sir John Campbell's

first secretary, second secretary, doctor, &c., had all left Persia in the person of Mr. M'Neill. At the head of the congratulatory mission the Right Hon. Mr. Ellis was placed; a gentleman, as I have heard on all sides, than whom none more competent, or more agreeable to the Persians, could, perhaps, have been found.

Mr. Ellis arrived at Tehran about the middle of October, 1835, and was most graciously received by the Shah, whose eyes glistened at the costly presents sent him by his cousin of England, and was profuse in his expressions of gratitude to the King of England, and for the assistance so lately rendered him by the British government. On taking leave, the Shah promised him all that he could require in the matter of a commercial treaty, which had been long asked for by the British government, in order that her commerce might be equally protected and favoured as to duties as that of Russia. The ambassador was graciously presented with many costly gifts, amongst others that of the portrait of the Shah, set in brilliants. He arrived at Tabreez, on his way to England, on the 3d of June, 1836, there awaiting the arrival of his successor, Mr. M'Neill.

About this time, Sir Henry Bethune again arrived at Tehran, bearing a letter from the King of England to the Shah of Persia, by whom he was received with much courtesy, his Majesty immediately appointing him to the command of ten thousand men, and granting him a firmaun, in which he was instructed "to teach the Persians the art of war," &c. Sir Henry brought with him, at great personal expense, miners and machinery, with which to work the mines of Persia, and with great activity and energy were these put in movement in the iron mines of Karadagh, so abundantly rich in this metal. Under what "firmaun," so rich in promises as they generally are, the British general was induced to launch into this speculation I never heard; but I certainly did hear, that not one of these promises had been realised, and that Sir Henry had found a grave for his capital (so far as it went) in the Persian soil, without any chance of even a remote remuneration. But this is episodical to my subject; and I will now briefly glance at Persian returns for British services.

Sir Henry, who had so distinguished himself as the gallant leader of the Shah's forces, was now

abandoned by them. The Persian colonels refused to obey him, and I heard the most amusing though the most disgraceful anecdotes on this subject; the commander-in-chief having on one occasion marched off, as he thought, at the head of his forces, whilst they all marched another way. The Shah, to disembarass himself of his unpopular commander, gave orders that he should head the army for Herat; he refused to obey, and consequently retired from the Persian service.

Mr. M'Neill proceeded to Persia in 1836, with the appointment of "envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the court of Tebran." The Shah was then busily engaged with the siege of Herat, marching and counter-marching, with no other effect than wasting his army and resources, devastating the country, and rendering himself unpopular with his faithful subjects.

It seems that Mr. Ellis felt rather sensitive on the subject of the Herat expedition when in Persia; and the Shah gave him the following explanation of its origin, provocation, and object:—"That Kamram Meerza, and the Affghauns under his authority, had penetrated from Seistan to Khorassan, and had carried away twelve thousand pri-

soners, whom they had sold as slaves, and had compelled the chief of Khain, his subject, to send tribute to Kamram Meerza; that the chiefs of Khain and Khaf, both towns of Khorassan, had sent agents to say that they must be immediately supported by the Shah, or submit to Kamram. His object was to redeem his captive subjects, to impose the tribute on Kamram, and to make him acknowledge his dependence on Persia."

Mr. Ellis seems to have concurred in the justice of the Shah's cause in marching against Herat, and so did Mr. M'Neill, in his dispatch to Lord Palmerston, dated February 1837. "Under these circumstances there cannot, I think, be a doubt that the Shah is fully warranted in making war against Prince Kamram;" adding, "that the capture of Herat would be certainly an evil of great magnitude."* A great deal was said at the time of the Russian influence at the court of Tehran, and that the Shah had been urged to undertake this expedition at the dicta of their ambassador, the Count Simonitch. Notes were passed, and explanations given on the part of Russia: such

* See papers presented to parliament relating to Persia, &c.

explanations were deemed *perfectly satisfactory* by Lord Palmerston.

Previous to Mr. Ellis's quitting Persia, he had made some effort to induce a reconciliation between the Shah and Kamram Meerza, which was assented to by the Persian grand vizier, Hajee Meerza Aghassee; and a letter was sent on the part of Mr. Ellis, through the Persian authorities, which suggested that he should send a confidential agent to the Shah to negotiate. To this no reply was given, but further provocations offered, by putting to death some of the Persian residents of Herat.

The Shah himself tried to bring him to terms in the winter of 1836; his reply was rather laconic:—"You demand hostages—we will give none; you demand a present—we will give what we can afford. If the Shah is not satisfied with this, let him come, and we will defend our city as long as we can; if we are driven from it, it will remain in your hands until we can find means to take it back again."

Kamram then assumed the title of Shah, with the lofty style of "Kibleh Alum," thereby dis-

claiming all dependence upon Persia. In the spring of the year, Kamram sent to negotiate, but retaining the newly assumed title of Shah, and offering such conditions that Mr. M'Neill thought they *ought* to have been accepted by the Persian government; but *they* thought otherwise; on which he assumed that it now became "an unjust war" on their part, of which he had formerly said, "the Shah is fully warranted in making war against Prince Kamram." But what said the prime minister of Persia in reply to this? "No confidence whatever is to be placed in these propositions, nor reliance on their assertions; whilst they seek to negotiate, complaints are coming in against the Affghauns from the nobles and priesthood of Khorassan, and other foreigners and natives."

In July 1837, the Shah set out on another expedition to Herat, in which he was said to have been assisted by the Russian minister. I should have before noticed that the English were bound by the treaty of Tehran of 1814 not to interfere between Persia and the Affghauns, acknowledging an equality between them. The Persian government felt therefore some little jealousy against the intercourse kept up between Mr. M'Neill and

the chief of Herat, which goes far to explain the transactions which subsequently occurred.

The agent from Herat who came up to negotiate, was accompanied on his return by a messenger of Mr. M'Neill's (Ali Mahomed Beg); he remained some time at Herat, and was on the 16th of October dispatched with letters for him from the agent and the vizier, and from Lieutenant Pottinger, a British officer, then in that city. Having passed the Persian camp, he was recognised not far from Meshed, under very suspicious circumstances. He was seized, brought back to the camp, ill-treated, and placed in custody.

Colonel Stoddart, then at the camp, remonstrated with the authorities, saying that this man was in the service of the mission; but they stripped him, took from him the letters, and returned that of Lieutenant Pottinger unopened. Hajee Khan, the Persian officer by whose orders this was done, appears to have been extremely violent, and his servants took away the man's property.

This outrage was deemed by Mr. M'Neill to be "a grave insult to the British government," for which he demanded an immediate apology of the Persian government, and the dismissal and disgrace

of Hajee Khan; intimating that "if this moderate demand was not complied with, he would suspend his intercourse with the Persian government."

They replied (referring to the treaty already alluded to), that a servant of Mr. M'Neill, a Persian subject, had been employed to encourage and strengthen the Affghauns; that the sway of the Shah of Persia over his subjects was despotic; that this man had some secret purpose in going to Herat; that the conduct imputed to Hajee Khan was misrepresented, &c.

In March 1838, Mr. M'Neill resolved to go to the Persian camp. On his arrival he had an audience of the Shah, who assured him of his sincere desire to maintain friendly relations with the British government. He had the same professions from the prime minister, Hajee Meerza Aghasee. He then sent Major Todd into Herat, to ascertain the feelings of its ruler towards an accommodation, and subsequently went into the city himself on the 10th of April, where he had a long conference with the prime minister, Yar Mahmoud Khan, said to have been "the most remarkable man of his age and country."

A draft of a treaty was then arranged, in which

all the different points were acceded to, except the independence of Herat. This Mr. McNeill reported to the Shah, calling the governor of Herat at the same time *Kamram Shah*. This was deemed personally offensive, and he declared that the siege should go on. From that time the siege went on with renewed activity, and the defence of Herat was mainly conducted by a British officer, Lieutenant Pottinger, who had been indefatigable in constructing these defences. Mr. McNeill then wrote a note in very strong terms to the Persian government, which was replied to by the prime minister very moderately, asserting their rights, &c.

The instructions from the Foreign-office to their representative in Persia were deemed by the Persians to be rather stringent; and the mode of communicating them very offensive.* The "ultimatum" of the demands of the British government was set before the Shah at an audience had of him by Mr. McNeill in May 1838, and he seemed disposed to accede to them all, so that his honour and credit might be preserved amongst his own people for abandoning the siege of Herat. This led to sundry correspondence with the grand vizier

* See Appendix.

of Persia, when all the demands of the British government were *unequivocally acceded to*; he was desirous to arrange every subject of dissatisfaction, although Mr. M'Neill had previously written in the following terms—"that in the event of a refusal to comply with these demands, the British government can pursue no other course than by employing the *ample means* at its command to oblige the Persian government."

With all the ready compliance of the grand vizier, still the British envoy was not satisfied. Ten days after, at an audience, he complained to the Shah that the demands had not been agreed to. The Shah said that he had agreed to them, and would write to that effect; and a note was written accordingly, doing more credit to the Persian minister than did the irritating cavils of the British envoy to himself, who seemed *determined* to be dissatisfied. His complaint now was "that the mission was falling into disrespect from the late outrage on one of its servants; he resolved, therefore, to restore the mission to its proper position, or to quit the court;" adding, "that as the indignities and insults offered to the British government were unrepaired, and as the Persian

government had determined to subject him to unworthy treatment, such as no British minister was ever before subject to at the court of the Shah of Persia, he should set out on the following day for the Turkish frontiers."

Here was menace in reply to concessions—a declaration of war where peace had been proffered. What less than saying, "I am *determined* to break with you, in spite of all you can say or do?" And here the good sense of the Shah manifests itself in his forbearance and conciliatory reply: "We do not know what is your Excellency's object in these writings, and what you propose to yourself, and what you desire; secondly, there has been no breach of treaty nor engagement on the part of the Persian government, and no indignity nor disrespect has been offered to your Excellency which should cause you offence." This was from the grand vizier, who added the Shah's own words—"His Majesty entreats that the British minister would not depart."

Nothing seemingly would do with an envoy determined to pick a quarrel. He sends in now a written memorandum of demands, a compliance being required to them in three days.

The Shah was quite uneasy at the threatened departure of the British minister, and pressed him to meet his prime minister to arrange these demands, who writes, "His Majesty has issued his commands that we agree to all his Excellency's demands, according to *his own writing*, and nothing else remains." But Mr. M'Neill would not meet the minister without first having it under the Shah's seal "that the reparation and the satisfaction he had demanded would be granted." This not being complied with, he took his departure, convinced "that he had exhausted all the means at his command to induce the Persian government so to act as to enable him to remain without dishonour."

Really this did appear like treating Persia with unexampled severity,—as if wounding his own government by a seeming injustice, which it could scarcely be supposed could emanate from Downing-street.

Mr. M'Neill then retired from the camp before Herat. He arrived at Meshed on the 25th of June, on his way to the Turkish frontiers. From hence his letter to Lord Palmerston says, "that the British mission was treated by the Persian

government as a proscribed body." In the meantime Herat had been assaulted by the Persian troops, who were repulsed with the loss of eighteen hundred men, and some of their best officers.

Arrived at Tehran on the 30th July, Mr. M'Neill sent instructions to Colonel Stoddart, still remaining in the Shah's camp, "that if the siege of Herat was persevered in, the friendly relations between Great Britain and Persia must cease, and the former must take such steps as she may think best calculated for the security of the British Crown." The Shah replied to the Colonel at the audience, "We consent to the whole demands of the British government;—we will not go to war;" and his Majesty commenced his march back to Persia on the 9th September.

One of his first steps of conciliation with the British minister was to dismiss Hajee Khan, who had maltreated the envoy's "beg," already alluded to; and Mr. M'Neill halted on his way, intending to resume his functions at the Persian court. But some new offence was now mooted; that "he had been informed that the Persian government had made a communication to at least one foreign government, reflecting in an unfriendly manner

on the conduct of the British government, and the proceedings of its agent." He then requested a copy of this document, which they declined giving.

This looks like an ingenious peg to hang a complaint upon;—as if *any* government was to give up its private correspondence at the demand of an angry British minister. Such a seemingly frivolous demand, after so many others of large importance had been granted, was enough to drive any government to desperation. The minister replied, "that the paper in question contained nothing to prevent the envoy coming from Tehran;" and he said to the messenger in an emphatic manner, "do not press me any more, or we certainly shall connect ourselves more closely and intimately with another European government."

This demand seems to have exhausted the patience of the Persian minister, and here the correspondence ceased, and seemingly on a frivolous point, totally unconnected with the interests of the British government; a provocation was offered, which resulted in the menace thrown out by Hadji Meerza Aghasee, that Persia would throw herself into the arms of Russia.

The British minister, on the 10th July, 1838,

issued a circular to the British merchants in Persia, that "all diplomatic intercourse between Great Britain and Persia had ceased; he had left the Shah's camp, and intended to proceed to Constantinople, to wait for instructions." He arrived at Tehran on the 29th July, and finally left Persia the 3rd January, 1839, giving instructions to Colonel Shee and the British officers to proceed to Bagdad; and our envoy extraordinary arrived in England accordingly.

Here I ought perhaps to end my long political yarn; but I have a sort of yearning towards Iran and the Iranis, having so frequently "been salted with their salt, and smothered with their flattery." I am therefore desirous to find some loophole to resume friendly relations with Persia—not by any compromise of our national dignity;—I would resent this as strongly as Sir John M'Neill himself; but I would take up "the reed of friendship, and offer the rose-bud of reconciliation" with hearty good will, purpose, and dignity. They made the first attempt, by sending, as "ambassador reconciliatory," Hoosein Khan, whom I had known long ago in Persia, in certainly any thing but diplomatic life. Lord Palmerston answered, in

reply to some question by an honourable member of the House of Commons, "that he had recommended her Majesty should not receive him in that capacity;" so he returned again, to strengthen the unfriendly feeling towards England. This was in the spring of 1839.*

But now comes the political consideration, "Is the friendship of Persia worth the purchase, or her enmity worth the averting?" How shall I pretend to answer these questions, who have never breathed in a political atmosphere? Persia has been long in a state of "decadence;" other and neighbour states thrive, and she withers; she has virtually lost her independence; the blight of oppression alienates her people from loyalty to the throne, patriotism, and all the other good feelings by which states thrive and kings govern.

* Hussein Khan, on his return to Persia, was well received by the Shah. His success in inducing an embassy from the French court, had, in some measure, compensated for his not succeeding at the court of St. James's. But recent accounts from Persia state that he has been disgraced, and publicly bastinadoed, for some alleged disrespect to the Shah; nor has he been restored to the royal favor by receiving a kulaat, which sometimes follows the bastinado. This is another instance, in addition to those I have already adduced, of the precariousness of the royal favor in Persia.

This is the "worm i' the bud," which will soon wipe her out of the map of nations.

Russia is looked to as the natural protectress of this falling empire; such is the feeling amongst the Persians themselves. Men of rank, fed by Russian bribes, attack her vitals, betray her interests, and thus accelerate her downfall. They make no secret of being in the Russian pay; her merchants engross the commerce, and exercise a tyranny in the bazaars which the native merchants cannot exercise.* Greek establishments are formed under Russian protection. Thus Russia in every way insinuates herself, which it might have been imagined to be British policy as far as possible to counteract.

Of the British residents only three remain; of the British commerce I am not aware that there are *any* remains. Where our name formerly was exalted, it is now degraded; where our influence was predominant, now it is null; and it is rapidly coming to pass the ominous prediction of Hadji Meerza Aghasee, "do not press me any more, or we shall certainly connect ourselves more closely and intimately with another European government."

* See Page 238.

The gangrene of both political and national animosity of "Persia and the Persians" towards "England and the English" has now grown to such a pass, that I query if the diplomatic skill of even Sir John M'Neill himself could heal it. We are held by them in contempt; nay, our military prowess is derided, in consequence of some paltry rencontres lately with the Persians at Bushire, in which they were successful!

This may perhaps give some uneasiness in Downing Street; I have no means of knowing, not having even a portico acquaintance there; but I trust that the vigilance of a British parliament will not allow our relations with Persia to remain longer in this nondescript state of abeyance, still having a mission hovering about somewhere on the frontiers,—daring nothing, winning nothing. Surely this is unworthy the dignity of this great nation.

From recent accounts, Persia is in a most disorganised state, both south and north, and seemingly drawing fast towards dissolution. Rival chiefs are starting up, defying legal authorities, and levying contributions as systematic plunder. But in our recent political transactions in that

country, unless the under currents of diplomacy from the Foreign-office to her minister turn up something very different from what floats on the surface, or that Persia has been guilty of some political inmorality, of which we know nothing, it does appear that this country, which for the last forty years we have been subsidising, wooing, and winning, has been estranged from us by a frivolous and vexatious complaint, unworthy the diplomatic intercourse of any nation. Well may they "laugh at our beards," having taken our money and profited by our military discipline. The moment their costly friendship was secured to us we fling it away. The minister was rewarded, and Persia is lost to us!

NOTE.—Whilst I am writing this I perceive that the Earl of Rippon has given notice in the House of Lords of an early parliamentary enquiry on the subject of Persia. I trust that it will lead to the re-establishing our friendly relations with that country, and that we shall be permitted once more to smoke the pipe of friendship with the "Adjemus."

CHAPTER XII.

COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GREAT
BRITAIN AND PERSIA.

THE cultivation of commerce between England and Persia appears to be an object well deserving the attention, as affording employment for that British capital and industry which require almost new worlds to spring up for their absorption. It did seem astonishing that the immense field which Persia offers for commercial enterprise had been so long unexplored by British merchants, or explored only to a very limited extent, and in small ventures, which made their precarious way from India, but never in sufficient quantities to answer the demand, or with sufficient regularity to give ground for any just estimate on the subject.

The resources and capabilities of Persia were but little known until they attracted the attention of the English nation so far back as 1553, in the reign of Edward VI., who thought it practicable to establish a commercial intercourse with Persia by the Caspian. In 1561, Queen Elizabeth sent out her ambassador, Anthony Jenkinson, to Taehmas Shah, the then King; but the country was in too disorganised a state, by the invasion of the Affghans, to admit of any beneficial results. The quaint and simple style of her Majesty's address was as follows:—

“ Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queen of England, &c. To the right mightie and right victorious Prince, the great Sophie, Emperor of the Persians, Medes, Parthians, Carmanarians, Magians, of the people on this side and beyond the river Tygris, and of all men and nations between the Caspian Sea and the Gulph of Persia, greeting, and most happye increase in all prosperitie. By the goodness of the Almightye God it is ordayned that those people which not only the huge distance of land and the invincible wideness of the seas, but also the very quarters of the heavens, doe moste farre seperate and sette asunder,

may neverthelesse through good commendation by writing, bothe ease and also communicate between them not onely the conceived thoughts or deliberations and grateful offices of humanitie, but also many commodities of mutual intelligence. Therefore, whereas our faithful and right well beloved servant Anthonie Jenkinson, bearer of these our letters, is determined, with our license, favor, and grace, to passe out of this our realme, and by God's sufferance to travel even into Persia and other your jurisdictions, we mind truly with your good favore to sette forward and advance that his right laudible purpose, and the more willingly for that this his enterprisc is grounded upon an honest intent to establish trade of merchandize with your subjects, and with other strangers trafficking in your realme. Wherefore we have thought good both to write to your Majestie, and also to desire the same to vouchsafe to our request to grant to our saide servant Anthonie Jenkinson good passports and safe conducts, by meanes and authority whereof it may be free and lawful for him, together with his families, servants, carriages, merchandize and goods whatsoever, through your realmes, dominions, jurisdictions, and provinces, freely and without im-

peachment, to journey, goe, passe, repasse, depart, and tarry, so long as he shall please, and from thence to returne whensoever he or they shall thinke good. If these holye duties of entertainment, and sweete offices of naturall humanitie may be willingly concluded, sincerely embraced, and firmly observed, between us and our realmes and subjects, then we doe hope that the Almighty God will bring it to pass that from these small beginnings greater moments of things shall hereafter spring, both to our furnitures and honors, and also to the great commodities and use of our peoples; so it will be known that neither the earth, the seas, nor the heavens, have so much force to separate us, as the godly disposition of natural humanitie and mutuall benevolence have to bind us strongly together. God grant unto your Majestic long and happy felicitie in earth and perpetuall in heaven. Dated in England, in our famous citie of London, the 25th day of the month April, in the yeare of the creation of the world 5523, and of our Lord Jesus Christ 1561, and of our reigne the third."

I cannot trace any good results arising from this mission. In 1626 the question was again taken

up by James the First, when Sir Anthony Shirley was sent out to establish mercantile relations with Abbas the Great, who received him very courteously, and said, "that he would deliver in Gambroon ten thousand bales of silk (nearly one million of pounds weight), and take in exchange English cloth." I cannot find, however, that this led to any established intercourse between the two kingdoms; a circumstance arising principally, I believe, from the uncertain fortunes of this country, whose history offers us a succession of civil wars. The jealousy, however, of the Armenians, who had been always the trading community of the East, and also that of the Russians, had, no doubt, some share in the matter.

In 1739, Mr. John Elton made his way into Persia, on the behalf of the British factors in St. Petersburg. He was the first English merchant who ever carried goods into Persia, and he gives a very interesting account of the difficulties he had to contend with in coming down the Volga, being exposed to pirates, &c., during his long and hazardous enterprise. He succeeded, however, in obtaining a decree in favour of the British merchandize from Riza Kouly Meerza, the then regent,

and son of Nadir Shah. This decree commanded the "Beglerbegs," or governors of provinces, to show every imaginable respect to English merchants, and afford them liberty "to sell to whom they please, without hindrance or delay."

Mr. Elton made known the success of his mission to the Commissioners of Trade in London, who presented a petition to the King, recommending "that this scheme for opening a new branch of trade to Persia, through Russia, may be very beneficial to this kingdom, and may deserve your majesty's royal protection." This alarmed the East India Company, as well as the Turkey Company, particularly the latter, who had profited largely by the sale of their cloths at Smyrna and Aleppo, from whence the Armenian merchants transported them into Persia. They, therefore, presented memorials on the subject to the Secretary of State, and these became the subjects of warm discussion in parliament, where it was made a question whether even the Turkey trade should not be thrown open to competition. An Act of Parliament was obtained for the Caspian trade, and British factors were sent into the north of Persia. The enactments of this Bill were intro-

duced by the following preamble:—"And whereas it may be of great advantage to this kingdom to open a trade to and from Persia through Russia, by promoting the consumption of woollen and other manufactures, goods and commodities thereof, if raw silk and other the goods and commodities of the growth, produce, and manufacture of Persia, be permitted to be imported into this kingdom from Russia, in return for such woollen and other manufactures as shall be exported from hence into Russia, and from thence carried into Persia, and not otherwise."

Four years afterwards, Mr. Jonas Hanway, that most respectable of British merchants, whose history I consult as the best authority on this subject, undertook the charge of a caravan of woollen goods for Persia, to the value of five thousand pounds sterling, on the behalf of the British factory at St. Petersburg. Having reached Zaritzen, 680 miles from Moscow, he embarked on the Volga,—the town just named being situated on a high bank of that river,—which he describes as the most esteemed in the world for its depth and extent. The navigation he states to be sometimes difficult, on account of its being choked by trees

and other large bodies floating occasionally down the stream. The first town, situated midway, is Chernoyare, where he stopped, and then proceeded to Astrachan. The ordinary rate of the current he describes as being about one mile an hour, but in the time of floods it is of three times that rapidity. In the winter it would be difficult to navigate it until the month of March.

Astrachan is a large town, containing seventy thousand inhabitants, and is celebrated for its annual fair, where are congregated together people of all nations and languages. From thence he proceeded down the Volga to the mouth of the Caspian, to Astrabad Bay, which is on the south-east side, and offers a very commodious anchorage. Here having suffered immense difficulties, in consequence of a rebellion, his caravan being plundered, and himself in danger of being carried into slavery by the Turkomans, he departs for Balfruth, which he reaches in six days. There again he encounters extraordinary hardships, which are detailed in his simple and interesting narrative.

Continuing through numerous other dangers, he arrived at Lankaron, where he found Mr. Elton, and soon after proceeded on his journey to Kas-

vine, on his way to the Persian camp, in order to obtain of Nadir Shah reparation for his loss at Astrabad. This was granted by the following decree—"That I should give the particulars of the loss in writing to Behud Khan, the Shah's general in Astrabad, who had orders to deliver to me whatever part of the goods might possibly be found, and restore them in kind, and the deficiency to be paid out of the sequestered estates of the rebels, without delay, to the last denar."

I cannot trace any commercial intercourse direct between Great Britain and Persia until about ten years ago. In the meantime our manufactures were scantily supplied from India at an immense cost of transit, making their long precarious way subject to numerous duties, plunderings, and the thousand and one taxes, which made them prohibitory for general consumption. But the Persians were so attached to every thing English, that even at those high prices our manufactures found a certain though limited demand. The trade was deemed of sufficient importance, that when Sir John Malcolm arrived in Persia in the year 1810, he formed a treaty with the Persian government for its protection, which treaty no longer exists:

for in all despotic governments no treaties are binding on the successors. I have carefully examined its contents, to see how far its enactments might serve for a future treaty of commerce between the two governments. I need not glance at them, but will copy merely the preliminary compliments, since it shows the inflated style of the Persian writing.*

* " In the name of the beloved and great God (then comes the King's seal), the earth is the Lord's, our august commands are issued, that the high in dignity, the exalted in station, the refuge of power and glory, the noble, the great in authority, the chiefs of high nobles, the Beglerbeks, the Haukeims, the Naibs and Mossudies of the kingdom under our protection (who are raised by our royal favour), become acquainted that at this period the dignified and eminent in station, the prudent, able, and penetrating, the greatest of the exalted followers of the Messiah, Captain John Malcolm, deputed from a glorious quarter, from the government of the King of England, whose court resembles the firmament, an emperor in dignity, like Alexander, possessing the power of the globe, and from the repository of glory, greatness and nobility, endowed with arbitrary power and justice, the Governor-General of the kingdom of Hindostan, for the purpose of establishing union and friendship between the two great states, has arrived at our threshold, founded on justice, and has been honoured by admission to our royal presence of conspicuous splendour, and has expressed a desire that the foundations of amity and union should be laid between the two states, that they should be connected together in the bonds of friendship and harmony, and that a constant union and reciprocal good understanding should exist. We, from our august selves, have given

Of the subsequent trade of Persia, the imports of manufactures consisted principally of Russian fabrics, brought down from Teflis by the Georgian merchants, to the amount of nearly a million of ducats annually, paying an *ad valorem* duty of five per cent. These merchants were protected by a Russian consul,* and they thrived in their traffic,

our consent, and have granted the requests of the high in rank above mentioned, and a treaty sealed with the seal of the minister of our ever-enduring government has been given to him; and you, the exalted in station, are positively enjoined of the necessity (after you become informed of our royal and august order), for all of you acting in strict conformity with the conditions of the treaty concluded and exchanged between the high in rank, the exalted in station, the great and glorious in power, near to the throne, in whom the royal confidence is placed, Hadji Ibrahim Khan, and the high in rank, the envoy, Captain John Malcolm (whose titles have been before enumerated), let no one act contrary to this high command, or to the contents of the annexed treaty, and should it ever be represented to us that any of the great nobles conduct themselves in opposition to the stipulations of this treaty, or are in this respect either guilty or negligent, such will incur our displeasure and punishment, and be exposed to our royal anger, which is like fire, and let them view this as an obligation.

" Dated on the ninth of Shaaban, in the year of Hegira 1215 "
(January 1801.)

Signed by nine ministers.

* The consul's power to protect the property of Russian subjects is remarkably strong, of which the following is an instance. A merchant complained to him of one of his Persian debtors attempting to defraud him, and that he deemed his pro-

acquiring great wealth, taking back with them raw silk, skins, wax, &c. At this time, therefore, the bulk of the foreign trade of Persia was Georgian.

Subsequently, at the period alluded to, some attempt was made to establish imports from England direct to Persia, by the indefatigable exertions of an active and intelligent agent of Abbas Meerza, who when in this country established a correspondence with a large mercantile house in London; by which means direct intercourse was opened, and a vessel navigated the seas, for the first time in history, bearing British manufactures to the port of Trebisonde, their destination being the Persian market. This affair excited considerable interest in England. The boldness of the undertaking, and the skill with which it was conducted, did at one time promise to realise the utmost hopes of the speculators. But "it is not in mor-

perty insecure in his hands. The consul issued his fiat for immediate sequestration of the debtor's property, and without referring at all to the Persian authorities. A "kavass," or messenger, was immediately sent to the debtor's shop, the door was closed, the Russian seal put upon it, which even the Amerr, or Governor of Tabreez himself could not pull down, the claims of the Russian subject were then seized for, and the other creditors might help themselves to any thing that remained

tals to command success;" though I may truly add that they "deserved it." It failed, however, for reasons on which I deem it unnecessary to enter.

This was the first time the port of Trebisonde had been ever resorted to as the highway to Persia. The navigation of the Black Sea had been dreaded by all navigators; the very name of "Karehdenguis," or "the furious sea," was a bugbear to masters of vessels; in fact, it was only by one of its frightful storms (the vessel being nearly wrecked) that the port was first made, and which subsequently led to a British vessel being purchased, and navigated to that harbour, as already alluded to. The consequence was, that this sea, once deemed so formidable, was now found at the proper season to be a "pacific" one, and Trebisonde became by degrees the highway from Constantinople to Persia.

When I first visited this interesting city, I was told that no other Englishman had been there for twelve years before; and I found but one European consul. When I last visited it, British commerce had unfurled her flag there, under the protection of her consul; and the transit of goods from Constantinople, which had not previously

equalled a million of piastres (£ 10,000) per annum, was now equal to nearly a million of pounds sterling, occasioned by the Persian merchants buying British manufactures at Constantinople, and transporting them to their own country by this newly opened road.

This wonderful activity in commerce, receiving its impetus in the way I have described, has introduced large supplies of English goods into Persia, where some British merchants are now established, having their correspondents likewise established at Erzuroum, protected by a British consul; while ramifications are springing up at numerous other points—such has been the result of this enterprising attempt; and although the continuity of it was broken, arising from uncontrollable circumstances, yet the credit is due to that genius and industry which first planned it.*

The Persians have a strong predilection in favour of English manufactures; but the present political relations between Great Britain and Persia are

* I could add much to the prospective advantages of a direct commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Persia, did not our present political relations with that country completely nullify all such advantages; and there are other pursuits in Persia which would open a large field for British capital and enterprise.

inimical to all commercial relations, and the want of a treaty to protect British merchants and their property,—which it has been often attempted to establish, but which the Persians refuse, it is said through the influence of Russia,—are circumstances which operate against a direct commerce between the two countries. But, looking forward to British supremacy in the Persian cabinet, I would say that such commerce might be established to the mutual advantage of both states. The minor points as to duties, protection and sympathetic interests must, of course, grow out of subsequent arrangements, to be built on a commercial treaty, the establishing of consuls, &c. Nor need I enter on the extreme caution requisite in dealing with a people, not only so sensitive to their own interests, but occasionally capable of commercial immorality. These are facts as notorious as the fervid sun that warms them; and their shrewd dealing is evinced, when I say that scarcely a Hebrew is to be found amongst them, and that even a Jew cannot live upon a Persian!

I will now briefly show what are the leading productions of Persia, on which a merchant might found his calculations of a barter trade. The prin-

incipal produce of Persia is raw silk, which was first introduced into that country from China. The province of Ghilan alone is said to produce more cocoons than the whole of Italy together. But the imperfect mode of winding by the natives, upon wheels of too large diameter, giving it very little twist, and the thread being gutty and uneven, this silk in the European markets of England and of France is in great disrepute, and is sold at an inferior price, under the name of "Persian silk." But even at this low price it is said to yield to the exporters a very large profit. By the introduction of European machinery and work-people, it is presumed that the greater part of these cocoons might be brought under the new system of winding. Indeed, from the information I have obtained in Georgia, it is clear that this might easily be accomplished.

The actual amount of the silk produced in Persia must be extremely uncertain, where no official returns can be consulted; the only data of calculation are the duties, which are principally farmed by individuals, and imposed arbitrarily. Including the province of Ghilan, and a part of Mazandaran only, I take a very moderate computation of fifty

thousand poods, or *two millions of pounds*, annually. Of this, Russia used to take one thousand bales, or three hundred thousand poods; but now they take much less, since they consume their own produce. A large quantity finds its way to Constantinople, where it is mixed with the "brusa" silk (to which it is very inferior), and exported largely to London and France. To India also partial exports are made, in return for colonial produce. I cannot guess as to the quantity in the latter case, having no data. From India it is sent to London, and sold at the Company's sales. The Georgian merchants take off a great quantity in barter for their goods.

These sources, added to the home consumption, are supposed to absorb the whole of the Persian produce of silk. The first sort, called "sharbaff, or weaver's silk," is estimated at one-fifth of the whole amount, and it is but of little more value than the second sort; its cleanness and gloss or brightness constitute its superiority. The white or silver colour is the most esteemed; but in Ghilan the greater part comes yellow from the worm. Between the second and the third quality there is a difference in value of about one-third. The fourth quality, called "derihot," is very inferior,

and never bought for exportation, being used for the common manufactures of the country.

The King takes his tithe of the province of Ghilan in raw silk, the quantity of which is very considerable; and there would be no difficulty in obtaining this amount from his agent for manufactures; nor indeed would there be any obstacle to absorbing the whole of the Persian produce in raw silk in this way, provided markets could be found in England or in France; and I deem it of the last importance to establish a source of sales for this valuable produce; since it secures *certain* sales in Persia to this amount; and even if no profit attends this export trade, it protects the British importers from risk, and furnishes them with immediate remittances.

But a magnificent enterprise might be established by *introducing the European mode of winding silk in Persia*. I have attentively observed the new plan adopted at Milan by an English house, and for which a patent has been obtained, called the "croissee," combining the winding and twisting the silk from the cocoons at the same time.

The produce of Persia consists likewise of opium, saffron, rhubarb, yellow berries for dying, nut-galls,

alum, arsenic, gum, cotton, rice, dried fruits, borax, hides, hare-skins, litharge, &c. &c. The Persians manufacture a few articles themselves, such as carpets and shawls, some of which are very magnificent. They make likewise some good silks, black lamb-skin caps, socks, &c. &c. A respectable powder-mill has been built about six miles from Tabreez, where they can produce from four to five hundred pounds of good powder daily.

It was some time since attempted to introduce the manufacture of cloth in Persia.* Mr. Armstrong, an Englishman, undertook it at the cost and request of Abbas Meerza. Fulling-mills were established at Khoie; and spinning, carding, and weaving machines, on the rudest principle, were made and put up at a small building a few hours distant from Tabreez. These I have seen, and the cloth likewise made on them, which was of the poorest description; though it may possibly answer in a small establishment of this description, if properly supported by capital and scientific industry, to the extent of clothing the prince's troops, and some of the lower orders of the people; for which

* The wool of Persia is very coarse. The sheep's tails are unusually large, sometimes weighing from ten to thirty pounds.

the wool is peculiarly fitted. Until our indefinite non-de-script, abeyance state of relations with Persia are cancelled by friendly ties, commercial treaties, and active correspondence, this country offers no invitation to mercantile pursuits. It may then open a large field for direct imports of British manufactures, where Manchester industry and Liverpool activity may be exchanged for cachmere shawls, silk, and saffron; thus irrigating both soils with the riches of commercial enterprise.

ADVENTURES IN KOORDISTAN.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR G.

Khoe, July 3.

Having promised to resume my correspondence from my resting-places, and being once more seated on the hard brick floor of the caravansery, I will retrace our short course to this place.

On Monday, the 28th ultimo, at seven in the evening, I took my parting farewell of Tabreez, with the Khan. The ceremony of leave-taking, being pretty nearly the same all over the world, needs no recapitulating. Our first stage to Mayane was only an affair of three hours; we were accompanied thither by some friends, and bivouacked under our tent. The evening was delightful, and

our road so odoriferous from the fragrant crops growing by the way side, that I had much enjoyment of it.

The Armenian priest having given us his parting benediction, we started the next morning for Derakaplane, an affair of six hours, the road being over a salt, arid country, and passing the ruins of many desolate villages, once the scene of contest between the Persians and the Turks. We made our way without incident, and the evening found us stretched on our mats at a very tolerable cottage, the owner of which, "a rysh soofeid," or "white beard," blanced with age and wrinkled with hardships, bore yet the semblance of heartfelt contentment, which I could not forbear to congratulate him upon: for content must ever be a subject for congratulation, whether it be clothed in rags or in the purple robe.

On the following morning we started, just when

" Night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach ghosts wander here and there,
Troop home to churchyards."

But ghosts saw we none, as we issued from our resting-place, to resume our journey.

Still a wild uninteresting country, partially bleached with salt. The lake of Ouroumia presently burst upon our view. The sight of any thing like the sea amid (if I may so speak) an ocean of plain was most grateful. This lake is very considerable.

We breakfasted by the side of a purling brook, stretched at lazy length, enjoying the luxury of unsophisticated rest. We then pursued our way to the village of Kurrakuppa, six hours distance. Many ruined villages, once seemingly of large extent, skirted the road. The village of Kurrakuppa was almost deserted, in consequence of the plague; only one or two wretched persons showed themselves, to caution us from entering; so we pitched our tent in a pretty piece of garden-ground in front of the lake, and enjoyed the luxury of repose.

On the following morning at four, to Seid Hadji, seven hours distance. The only novelty of this march was over a very fine and steep pass, cut out of the rocks at an immense height, which commanded an extensive view of the lake and the numerous hilly ranges with which the country was intersected. This village was prettily situated, and an abundance of water gave it the advantage of

rich pasturage and fine crops of corn, which the peasantry were then gathering. It is a custom on the approach of strangers to present you with a sheaf, and sing over it a welcome. This compliment was paid to us, doubtless to worm out some of our coin. Here we were accommodated in the Prince's hunting-box, which had been so despoiled by the Russians in 1828, that it was scarcely habitable. The country abounds with game, and when the Prince visits Khoe, it is his custom to take up his residence here.

In the evening we made another march of three hours, and met a caravan, with which we bivouacked, and proceeded very early the following day for Khoe. The approach to the town from this direction was much prettier than the country I had gone over the preceding year, being planted and well watered; numerous villages intersecting the way, and an abundance of garden-ground, rich in its produce. We arrived here in our old quarters yesterday morning, and having to remain the whole of the day, my pen and books are the only resources to which I can resort, to "feather the wings of time." The plague is said to be in the town, carrying off several persons daily. A Turk has just

been here to say that we had better by no means go on, for the Turkish troops have been defeated at Byazide, and there is every thing to apprehend from stragglers.*

Our Camp at Maliz-Gbird, July 12.

Here we are, stuck by the way, and by rather singular circumstances. But, not to break the thread of my narrative, I will go back to Khoc, which we left in the evening of the day that I wrote to you, after witnessing part of the ceremony very religiously observed by the Persians, of the death of Hussein, of which Henry Martin gives some report from Shiraz. The whole of the ceremonial I cannot enter upon, since it lasts ten days, and I witnessed only the first scene.†

At the village of Perah we met with rather a rough reception, the people fearing that we might infest the place with plague, and we were obliged to bivouac on the bare ground, which was well wetted with dew by the following morning. I was the more surprised at this, since the climate has been said to have *no dew*—such, at least, is the report of some travellers.

* This was during the Russian invasion of Turkey.

† See the Chapter on Persian Festivals.

The next day's march was an affair of ten hours to Zordava, sultry and fatiguing, with many a plague-tainted village to pass on the way, the frightened inhabitants of which had fled from the destroyer. One or two, on our approach, crept from their hiding-places, in a wretched state of misery.

In a luxuriant valley, hemmed around with a fine mountainous barrier, we came up with a large caravan of travellers, and pitched our tent amongst them. I can find no incident for you this day beyond the usual monotony of travel, which was at the rate of about three miles an hour.

The following morning we started before Aurora, for Kara Arnah (six hours), and here we came through a beautiful pass into Koordistan, on the Persian frontier. It was as wild and uncouth as its inhabitants are celebrated for being. But I can always luxuriate in the wilderness, and enjoy its romantic splendours. Here, by the noisy rill, our wallet was unburthened of its contents, and our morning meal washed down by the pure beverage of nature.

As I wound my way through crag and cleft, I found much to admire in this new country; but

of inhabitants we saw none—not even a goat—to dispute our passage. We passed through what is called “the Dark Valley,” and reached uninterruptedly our bivouac, near the burrowed village of Alai Keni, which is so little above the ground that I could see only a few of what seemed respectable sized mole-hills. The country around was extremely wild; small valleys, completely shut in with their watery riches, issuing from the fantastic hills, which seemed to look down contemptuously on their narrow confines.

Presently a Turkish officer and a Koord came down one of those seemingly inaccessible mountains on horseback, to demand the cause of our intrusion, &c., which being satisfactorily explained, they soon disappeared. The usual business of tent pitching, and setting up our rest for the day, gives time a fillip, which the monotony of travelling sometimes renders not a little desirable.

We were summoned from our repose at the usual time the next day, which was generally

“An hour before the heavenly harnessed teams
Begins its golden progress in the east.”

We sprung into the saddle and reached Barghiri in six hours. The country now opened a new

page of interest; the varieties were more frequent, and on a smaller scale, being a succession of undulations, generally richer than the last day's surface. We met troops of Armenians, with their bullocks laden with corn to provision the Turkish army before Byazide, and one group consisted of an entire emigrating village, the various turning out of which must be seen to be conceived:—children in panniers on the bullocks' backs, goats and kettles, calves and carpets. The vacant stare of the Armenians, and the tattered garb of the females, with an attempt at finery with their nose-rings, armlets, &c., formed a grotesque group, far beyond my descriptive powers.

Here, from a rugged eminence, we first saw the Lake of Van, which at the distance looked boundless, and therefore very interesting. Previously to this we had passed one or two camps of the wild-looking Koords, in their miserable black tents. They were to be compared, in appearance, almost to the inhabitants of the lower regions; I computed them at four or five hundred in all. They would fain have held intercourse with us; but we kept them at bay by the musket, not so much from any dread of their hostility, as that they might not

infect us with plague. Never was this country, perhaps, more desolated than at present by that terrible scourge of the East. At a village which we passed, a poor man brought down his child for us to look at, which had recovered from the disease.

We crossed a once well-built Armenian bridge, which was now in ruins. I observed that the keystones were marked with the cross, which seems to have been always the badge of this ancient people. Amongst some ruins which I explored, many a sign was observable of their Christian faith. This is very remarkable, since I understand their date to have been long before the cross was raised, or a Saviour known, except through the Prophets.

Here in this river, seemingly deserted by man, flocks of wild ducks held their domain, and troops of tortoises, which I traced to the water's edge. After expending a little powder and shot we were ready for breakfast, and with an appetite that can only be gathered by fatigue and the mountain air. I like these rural repasts, on the simple plan suggested by nature. How much better are they than your bloated surfeittings, which congeal rather than refine the blood of health.

An uninteresting continuance of road brought us again into the front of the lake of Van, and here we determined to bivouac.* In the course of the day a party of Koords passed near our camp, returning from Byazide, where we understood they had been defeated, after having made good their footing in the fortress, from whence they were finally expelled by the Russian troops. They did not molest us, but we deemed this a very critical part of our road, since it led to the seat of war, which was then raging; and we had every thing to apprehend from retreating troops, whose custom is, not only to plunder travellers and villages in their way, but even to plunder each other when they can find no other food for their rapacity. With defeat they associate in their minds the termination of all lawful government; waste and desolation then mark their steps, and destruction awaits those who fall in with them.

The following morning to the fortress of Ardiz, a respectable looking town externally, which we did not enter, but encamped in a meadow in front

* This lake is stated by the Armenian writers to be one hundred miles in length and sixty miles in breadth. Small vessels ply upon it, and there are several villages on its borders, not far from the city of Van.

of it; and a very pretty encampment we made, being surrounded by a fine river, and situated in the richest pastures, where man and beast seemed to luxuriate in every comfort. Our caravan consisted of about three hundred cattle, and sixty men, composed of various merchants conveying their wares to Erzroume; and it was deemed advisable, in these troublesome times, to make the party as large as possible, most of them being well armed. Great was the curiosity of some of the natives, at the Ferengée stranger who was lying down in the tent, and groups of people surrounded me, wondering at my boots, my spurs, and my tight coat; one of them every now and then advancing to ascertain by the touch whether I really was flesh and bones, or only composed of pipe-clay. I always on these occasions encouraged their timid advances to knowledge; stretching myself out for their examination, and inviting them near me; laughing both with, and at them; fraternising with them as much as was possible without the aid of language; and letting them see that I was a human being like themselves.

The character of the country is as I have before described; generally, rich and luxuriant patches

of green pasture lay between an amphitheatre of mountains, which frequently suggested the enquiry, "Where are we to find egress?"—this and ingress being through some narrow defile, which is lost to the eye immediately it is passed. A solemn stillness reigns around; not a tree or shrub is visible; and the proud barren hills, rising in solemn majesty, seem to say, "Who dares thus to intrude on our kingdom?"

At three the next morning we broke up our camp for Herazdown, a march of eleven hours. The early part continued to be on the borders of the lake of Van, over a rocky defile, where we met a miserable-looking "Cossett," as they are called in this country, being a foot-messenger sent from town to town, which they do in an incredibly short space of time, and endure fatigue beyond what a horse could do. My friend held a conversation with this man, as they sat quietly down together on a huge stone; and it was rather important information that he obtained. The messenger had advanced, four days before, very near to Erzroume, and saw the Russians surrounding it. The villages in the intermediate way had been plundered by the Koords, and he had himself fallen in with a

party of them, who had robbed him of every thing. Indeed, he was in a miserable plight. He advised us not to go on, the country being in so disturbed a state.

What was to be done? After having toiled on thus far, to retreat would look pusillanimous, yet to advance seemed full of danger, if our reporter could be relied on; so we adopted a middle course—that of retiring as much as possible from the high road, and seeking a more unfrequented way, by which we hoped to miss the marauders. In this way we pursued our course to Herazdown (eleven hours), along a weary way, half roasted under an eastern sun. The country was arid and uninteresting; but we established ourselves in a little nook near the mill, whose waterfall was a source of much riches to the immediate neighbourhood. The miller and his men were civil Armenians, seemingly very content in their obscurity, but showing much astonishment at the Ferengée stranger, as I moved through their domains. The sheik and the chief of the village came to visit us in our tent; and the latter was so much pleased with the attentions of the Khan, that he offered to accompany us on the morrow to the next station, saying that

there was a fortress of some importance, in which we should find safety if necessary.

We departed at four in the morning, and but very little interest attended our way. The country was more level than it had been hitherto, and the surface partially barren, partially cultivated. With the exception of one Armenian village, I do not recollect encountering a single living object until we neared the fortress, when we met a Tatar with four men going on to Byazide. He advised us to take an escort from the fortress, which he had no doubt the Agha would grant us, the country being overrun with Koords, and in a most dangerous state for travellers.

At two o'clock we welcomed most unfeignedly the fortress walls, being fatigued, heated, and exhausted, body and mind—so much so, that I shall bid you adieu until to-morrow's sun gladdens the scene, and freshens me for the continuance of my correspondence.

Yours.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR G.

The Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,
July 13.

EVENTS crowd upon me so fast, that I fear, I shall grow confused in my narrative of them. But as you know I am a confirmed methodist in all my proceedings, let me trace matters regularly from our arrival at the fortress.

The Khan went to pay his respects to the Agha, whilst I remained under the walls on my horse, with some domestics, anxiously waiting his return. A crowd soon collected, eyeing me with much curiosity, and, as I thought, a sort of impertinence in their gaze, and with more familiarity than usual, pulling about my legs, my spurs, &c., as much as to say, "Now we have ye." But, as I had no speech for remonstrance, I kept my front firm

and determined. This, however, would not do long amongst a host of impertinents; so, after waiting half an hour, I made my way into the fortress, and at the gate was rudely repulsed with the term of "Ruski." I said in reply, "Ruski yoke—Inglesia." Still the fellow kept me at bay, and had not one of our men come up, I should scarcely have gained admittance. Having mounted a flight of stone steps, I found myself in the grand hall of the divan, a large straggling place, with an open balcony in front; but the floor was "of the earth—earthy." I soon spied out my friend at the upper end, and approached him uninvited: the staring senators on each side, squatted on the ground smoking, and astounded seemingly at my intrusion. But my plan is always to go forward; so I bolted on, unheeding this formidable looking assembly; for such it really was. I should think there were more than sixty in number, in their various Koordish costumes, flaunting with rags, and seemingly puffed up with consequential pride, as though mankind depended upon their sufferance. At the door stood a posseé of armed guards, ready, as I thought, for any work, however sanguinary.

I approached the Agha, and took off my cap to him; in reply to which salutation he gave me a cut across my shoulder with my friend's whip—a curious Koordish reception, I thought. But when the Khan told him, “By striking him you strike me,” he became more civil, and I sat me down near him. The moment I glanced at his physiognomy I felt repulsed at the hard and coarse expression of his features, his grizzled motley beard, and uncouth appearance generally. I form much of my estimate of oriental character by the beard, and have always found that where it is long and flowing, it springs from a generous soil, where dwell candour, liberality, and enlightenment; but where the beard is short and stubby, of irregular and stunted growth, it invariably denotes an ungenerous nature, disfigured by ignorance, pride and malice.

I looked around upon the auditory, and, with one or two exceptions could entertain no better opinion of them than of the Agha himself. As they fumed away every eye seemed intent upon me; and I judged myself to be the subject of their conversation, from many a bitter look and significant glance. At length I began to feel it rather

awkward, that the divan should be occupied solely about me. But it would not do to show alarm on such occasions; so I looked as well pleased as I could, assumed an air of the utmost confidence, and was (or seemed, at least) quite at my ease. In the meantime the conference was going on very warmly between the Agha and the Khan, who at length said to me in an undertone, "I wish you had not come up. I have a great deal of trouble with this man; he takes you for a Russian spy, and will not grant us an escort, nor even allow us to proceed."

This was rather an awkward predicament certainly, and I puzzled my brain for expedients how we were to get out of Koordistan, a country which is very little frequented by European travellers, and would be less so, had they partaken of my disagreeable sensations. However, I took coffee with my new friends, smoked and laughed with them, as they almost turned me topsy-turvy while examining me; for when once my political character was established, I had to submit to all sorts of ridiculous inquisitions and enquiries.

After about an hour thus spent, the council broke up, and we were then led by one of the

Agha's men into a long gloomy looking apartment, with a small iron grated window, and requested to take our place on an old piece of carpet, horribly filthy and ragged. The man now held a long discourse with the Khan, which not understanding, I was ruminating on the various adventures of my oriental travel, when lo! and behold! two fierce-looking soldiers came in, armed *cnp-a-pie*, and made their approach to me, followed by a third, bearing in his hand a long axe, as though he held the office of the Agha's executioner. There is a something in the appearance of ignorant wildness, when holding the means of their arbitrary power, which gives one a sort of awkward sensation, knowing that one may be the object on which to exercise that power. They approached and stood over me as their prisoner; and I shall never forget their barbarous grinnings, as one on either side, resting on their guns, looked down upon me with a sort of contemptuous feeling, as a victim to the caprice of their commander. The one with the axe, whom I took for the executioner, kept at a more respectful distance, and I could not but glance my eye at the edge of his weapon, to see if it was well whetted for its pur-

pose. But none of those things moved me from my self-possession. I felt perfectly composed, and merely observed to my friend, "Then it appears we are prisoners."

"It does appear so," was his laconic reply.

Fancy me stretched out on the mat, caught in the Koordish toils, amongst a race of utter barbarians, with an indefinite expectation every moment of something strange happening, but from not understanding their talk, wholly unable to guess what! My alleged crime was that of being a "Russian spy;" but the cause of these men's exultation was my being an infidel, wearing the badge of the Messiah instead of that of Mahomet: a fact which is quite enough, in their estimation, to justify your being wiped out of existence, without judge or jury.

My guards soon assumed that ignorant sort of familiarity which is intended to teach you their power. They sat down on either side of me, and again examined all the detail of my dress, which I talked about much to their amusement. In the meantime various messengers came in from the Agha; the outer room was filled with guards, at least sixty in number, and the whole garrison

seemed in a sort of feverish commotion, as though some grand event was about to happen. Our passports and Turkish teskerets, in the meanwhile, had been examined by the Effendi; but so ignorant was he, that he could not read the Turkish one with which I had been furnished at Constantinople. Another person was found, however, to prove by them that I was not a "Russian spy," but a free-born Englishman—a fact on which the Khan tells me I so often pride myself. Still the Agha said I was an infidel, and that was sufficient to justify him in detaining me for a time. Thus my fate was held in suspense during many conferences with my friend, whose never-failing resource of argument was tried to the utmost for my liberation—"If you detain him, you detain me; I will never move without him."—"But," said the Agha, "I have a great many troops in the garrison, and they all tell me that he is a Russian spy. You know how easily heads are taken off in Turkey, and by liberating him I shall endanger my own. I must detain him; but you may go when you please."

It appears that during this time the Agha had been meditating the plunder of the caravan, which

had proceeded about a mile off, across a bridge, over a fine branch of the Euphrates; and he had sent to a neighbouring chief to help him in the business. The Khan then offered him a large bribe to allow us to proceed; but he replied, "Why should I take four or five purses, when I can have the whole? It would be enough for me and my family, and I should go to Aleppo."

Thus the plunderer had no scruple to avow his iniquitous purpose. But the ingenuity of my friend worked upon him to defer it for a time. "'Tis true we are in your power; but recollect, the Persians are not only friendly with your nation, but there is every possibility of their aiding the Turks against the Russians, and I can get immediate assistance from Khoe, before you could possibly be off." This had great weight with the Agha, as well as the advice of the moolah, to desist from an act which would bring disgrace upon the fortress, and, ultimately, danger upon himself.

Osmond Agha wanted the caravan to return to the fortress for protection (as he said) against the Koords outside the walls. This my friend declined, and whilst he was standing at the grated

window, a shot was fired at it from below. Off ran the Agha, seemingly afraid of his own people; and presently one of his men ran in stripped of every thing, having been plundered by his Koordish brethren even under the very walls. More shots were fired, and a second man came in, in the same trim. You can conceive nothing like the confusion of the scene in which we were placed, the executioner and the guards still standing at the door waiting for orders, the very plunderers plundered amongst themselves, and we expecting every moment to share the same fate.

I went to the window to have a view of what was going on, and immediately a shot was levelled at me; but it rebounded from the wall harmlessly. I cannot convey to you all the detail of this afternoon's adventures—the noise, the uproar, the savage looking troops—the negotiations going on with the Agha for our joining the caravan.

At length a messenger came in to me to say, "You have nothing to fear;" so I concluded my liberation was at hand. My guards and the executioner now withdrew, and I was allowed to walk about the outer apartments, and to mix amongst the wondering throng, which I did

with the utmost *nonchalance* ; and, being prevailed upon by a large bribe, the Agha allowed us to depart at eight o'clock for the caravan, which had proceeded some three miles off, on the other side of a ruined bridge over the Euphrates, and here we bivouacked for the night, keeping a strong guard against probable intruders.

Wearied out with anxieties and fatigue, I was glad enough to get out of my captivity, and to stretch myself once more on my own mat, where I found most refreshing sleep, after this long and anxious day of toil and danger.

Yours.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR G.

The Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,
July 16.

I now resume the thread of our stirring adventures. We started from our camp at five o'clock on the Sunday morning, to make a retrograde movement; having been assured by the Agha that it was dangerous to proceed; of which fact, indeed, we had every indication around us, as already related. I should tell you that in the course of the night two messengers had arrived from this man to the Khan, bidding us to return, saying that there was great danger of our being attacked. But Ali would not allow his master to be disturbed. The motive for his sending will appear by and bye, as I have since learnt from my informant here in

the fortress. We had a sort of feeling that it was better to avoid passing the fortress if possible, and kept somewhat to the right, and were proceeding as we thought with extreme caution, having put the caravan in line, ourselves bringing up the rear. But just as we mounted the height of the village, we heard some guns fired, and a loud shout from the Koords; and on galloping up to the front, we perceived the servants being stripped and knocked off their horses, the muleteers being plundered, the caravan surrounded by a large body of armed men, and such a scene of confusion as is quite indescribable. Immediately we came in for our share of the attack. Three men surrounded the Khan, and three more surrounded me; one of the latter took hold of my bridle, another stood with a drawn sword on my right, and a third with his musket on the left, gave me such a thrust behind as almost to unseat me from the horse. Still I kept my saddle, and really I cannot but laugh when I remember the odd way in which I parried them off for two or three minutes, while waiting to see what the Khan would do—being determined, if possible not to yield.

The first things they robbed me of were my pi-

tols, before I had the power to draw them from the holsters. Being thus taken prisoners they led us towards the fortress, ordering me to get off my horse. I still kept on as well as I could, till another thrust behind, and a blow in the face, serving to dislodge a tooth or two, and the fierce-looking fellow with the sabre, wielding it close to me with the most menacing attitude, I thought it better to surrender at discretion, particularly as my friend was by this time on foot and in their power, and I saw them stripping him of his coats, his watch, and even his shawl. They then began to rifle my pockets, and turned out my powder-horn, water-flask, &c. I begged hard for my book; but the fellow, as if in contempt of me, threw me back the covers of it, and kept the inside. Then he demanded my great coat. This I resisted until the Khan called out, "Give up your coat." In the scuffle I lost my Persian cap; so you may fancy your poor friend in the wilds of Koordistan, surrounded by two or three hundred of these barbarians making the most horrible shouts, and going off with their booty in triumph.

By this time our servants came up. Ali made a good resistance, and was shot at by one of the

Koords; but the ball passed him and carried off two of the toes of one of the muleteers. This was the only casualty of the kind I have yet heard of. Six of the servants were likewise stripped of every thing, even to their shawls, their pockets turned out, and all their money taken, with numerous effects of guns, pistols, powder-horns, &c.

Fancy our party of eight, stripped of every thing, huddled together on the side of a rock, holding a council of war as to what we were to do for personal safety! Apprehending that the wretches might not be satisfied, and that our lives might next be sacrificed, we determined on retracing our way to Khoe on foot. The caravan was driven under the fortress walls, the muleteers dispersed, and every thing seemed to have become a prey to their rapacity, including our beautiful horses intended for England, on one of which I was mounted; but our thoughts were now only occupied about our personal safety.

Pursuing our march, we met the good moolah, Hadji Osman Millah Husscin, whose white turban I recollected to have seen in the Agha's divan. He stopped us, and said we must by no means proceed, or we should certainly be murdered—that a

party of Koords was waiting for us, being apprised of our intention to return. We then halted, and one of the robbers came up who had plundered me of my coat, and looking most fiercely at me, demanded my boots, saying that I was an infidel, and he would shoot me as he would a dog. The moolah reasoned with him, and asked "if he was not ashamed of being such a barbarian, who after having stripped me of every thing, now wanted to take my life?" and I may safely say that I owe my life to the interference of this good moolah, who seemed to compassionate very much our desolate situation; nor would he leave us, but continued to manifest his sympathy in every possible way. I think I told you that the Khan speaks all the languages so well—Turkish, Koordish, &c., that through him I could always learn the particulars of what passed.

Presently Osmond Agha came out of the fortress on horseback, with his numerous followers, and pretended that he had nothing to do with the plunder of the caravan—that it was done by the troops over whom he had no controul. He invited us in; and although we learnt that he had ordered the plunder, yet we thought it best to show some apparent confidence in him, and claim his pro-

tection, and that we should be safer within than without the walls. As I have learnt here from some of the Armenians, he regretted very much having allowed the caravan to go across the bridge on Saturday, and wished that he had made a plunder of the whole. To effect this he sent the messengers as before mentioned, to decoy us off in the dark, that he might better effect his purpose. Many debates were held amongst his people, whether they should attack us in our position or not; but it was argued that we were well armed, and our being on the other side of the bridge would enable us to make the better resistance. We had about fifty people in all—Persian merchants, muleteers, &c. Six of the latter made their way off, after being plundered, to Khoe; and by them we hope our misfortunes will be made known to our friends at Tabreez.

Thus we found ourselves once more in the fortress; and, as I glanced at my prison window, I thought of the scenes of Saturday, whilst the Koordish divan was sitting in judgment on the supposed Russian spy. Being destitute of every thing but our personal habiliments, we felt not a little our wretched plight, being completely in the

hands of these savage marauders, and unable to form any idea of our coming fate.

This being the first robbery I had suffered, I felt my situation to be not a little awkward; so distant from my native land, without any chance of judge or jury to redress my grievances. As I sat on my solitary mat ruminating on these things, crowds of people, troopers, &c., came around us, some of them seeming to commiserate our piteous fate. One of the latter sat down beside me, and tried his dumb efforts of condolence, by offering to cover my head with his turban; but I declined the badge of Mahomedanism, preferring a bald pate to this insignia of the impostor, though I felt grateful for his courtesy.

By and bye I spied the soldier who had robbed me, and pointed him out to my friend. He had the impudence to come and look down upon his victim with a sort of savage grin, as much as to say, "How completely I have stripped him!" But my feelings towards him were more of pity than of anger.

In the meantime our fortunes were improving, though we were unconscious of what was going on. A divan had been held by the Agha, who found

that the villagers had begun the plunder of the caravan, which was not only much to his detriment in the way of profit, but of credit also, since the blame would naturally attach to him. The sheik and the moolah represented what disgrace he had brought upon the fortress, by pillaging the property of a neutral power, and what risk he ran from the probable approach of the Russians; and this, added to the arguments of the Khan, that he should soon receive assistance from Khoe, as some of the muleteers had made their escape, induced him to change his purpose. The man seemed quite appalled with the force of these arguments, and ordered his troops to go out and protect the caravan, to enquire for our things which were lost, and restore them as soon as possible, assuring us that he would do his utmost to recover them. Then he held a council in our room; convened all the witnesses he could: and you would have been amused to hear the noisy vociferations—each giving his own story—accusing each other—rogue set against rogue by the principal rogue himself!

At length he could keep no order amongst them; and in the utmost fury, sword in hand, the Agha was obliged to disperse them. Such a Koordish

court of justice I suppose was never before seen by any European. No language of mine can describe the wild, haggard-looking people, many barefooted, and flaunting in showy rags; armed, too, *cap-a-pie*, some of them with curious shields and lances, others with their girdles stuck round with old knives and buttons, pouches of all sorts, &c.

The good moolah, Hadji Osman Millah Hussein, who was my best friend in the group, came by my side, and consoled me with many a gesticulation; he likewise offered me his turban, and said that our effects would all be returned, and that we had nothing to apprehend. I always liked the appearance of this man from the first; generosity was stamped in his visage, and I could read the character which subsequently developed itself. During this time the spoils were being partly brought in, by the order of the Agha, and partly divided amongst the troops, a party of whom, in the other room, were at high words amongst themselves. At length many of the spoils being arrived, of guns, pistols, powder-horns, &c., I was called in to claim my gun, which I was not a little happy to see; but my pistols were not amongst the rescued plunder.

In the forenoon they fired their guns from the top

of the battery. This was to announce some good news from Erzroume—that the Russians had been defeated, or something to that effect; so ignorant were they of the real state of things, the Russian troops having occupied that city three days before.

I have to notice another Koordish friend, called the Effendi, whose office it was to write and translate for the Agha the passports, &c. He exerted himself much in my favour the preceding day, and endeavoured to remove, as far as possible, the idea of my being a Russian spy. This man had an open, pleasant countenance; and although dressed with ragged finery, he wore a good turban, &c. There is a something in sympathy which is gratifying, even if it comes from a savage, since it shows that the human heart is moulded by the same Divine Power, under whatever sky its owner may be born. An old dervish, too, with his figured scraps of the Koran upon his cap, who was also a member of the divan, was oftentimes on our mat, squalid with filth and rags; he was violently against me on the preceding day, saying, that “If I was English, I was equally to be dreaded as a Muscovite.” This man was a native of Hindostan. “The English,” he said, “had

come and stolen his country from him in India, and they were extending themselves to all parts of the world." But the Khan, by a bribe, silenced this man, and brought him over to be one of our strongest partisans! In this particular, I know of no one who studies and knows character so well as the Khan, adapting himself to each in their peculiar way; always ready to meet their arguments; flattering, coaxing, threatening, in turn. I am convinced that no one else could have extricated us from the numerous difficulties with which we were surrounded.

The Agha, still considering us as his prisoners, we had to obtain his permission to go to our camp, just outside the walls. This we did at six o'clock, and found the caravan formed as usual, and our tent in the middle. The refreshment derived from food and sleep, after all the toil and danger of long anxious days, I leave you to guess at.

Yours.

LETTER IV.

The Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,

MY DEAR G.

July 18.

The next morning, whilst preparing breakfast, the cry went through the camp, "the Koords—the Koords!" and then, for the first time, I learnt that we had enemies to fear as well from without as within. Immediately we barricadoed ourselves as well as we could, with some great stones planted around the camp, and the enemy kept their distance; we then went into the fortress to pay our respects to the Agha—this courtesy being politic even to a robber, to propitiate him as much as possible, since we were so completely in his power. Again we found the Koords in full divan, the hall of audience being crowded with

such a motley group as is perhaps seldom congregated together elsewhere. Osmond Agha was much more polite than he had hitherto been, and promised to return our visit on the following day.

In the morning we had numerous visitors, amongst whom were our two best friends, the good moolah, Hadji Osman Millah Hussein, and Hadji Mahomed. The former seemed to take me under his particular protection, saying, "We both proceeded from the same God, and I consider you as my brother." This was a wonderful stretch of liberality from "a true believer" (as they call themselves) to an infidel; and I felt not a little thankful to him for such proofs of a generous heart. The day thus passed on very pleasantly, and I was perfectly at ease, and, I may say, happy, even in our then ticklish position.

On the Tuesday we had numerous visitors again, so much did our camp excite the attention of those within and without the fortress. Amongst others, was Osmond Agha and his suite, which quite filled our tent. My friend kept up the utmost attention and politeness towards them, although we had reason to apprehend that they might plunder us the next hour. Indeed, I have

heard since my being here, that he had then invited two of the neighbouring chiefs to come down and assist him. He seems to have been afraid to take the odium upon himself of robbing us whilst we were under his protection; yet he would not allow us to move backwards or forwards, but held us as his prisoners.

Whilst these visitors were taking coffee with us, the alarm was again given — “the Koords! the Koords!” Up jumped the Agha, more frightened seemingly than any of us, and ran into the fortress, and the rest all dispersed in a moment. I leave you to judge of the state of this country, when the Koords within are afraid of the Koords without. The roofs of the huts within the walls were immediately covered with musqueteers, and small parties of them sallied out, but not to a great distance, to meet the threatening foe, against whom we were obliged to provide every night by a strong guard, lest they might pounce upon us. Still they kept at a distance, and allowed us another night’s quiet repose. I scarcely ever permit myself to be disturbed in this particular, and I never slept more soundly than amidst all our alarms and dangers.

This brings me up to Wednesday morning, when

there was another cry of "the Koords!" but I had been so accustomed to it, that it now failed to move me off my mat. We had many troop visitors this day, bringing in our plundered effects by degrees. We thought it better to give out that we would purchase what they had, rather than leave them behind. Thus I recovered my powder-horn, coat, flask, &c. You would have been amused to see these savages grinning through their leather countenances, as they handled our coin in exchange for our own things. One of them in particular excited my attention, as in his curious survey of my dress, he enquired if my shirt-collar was made of paper!

The Agha was not idle this day; he seemed to long to pounce upon us; but shame or fear, or some other restraining motive, made him delicate in his roguery, so he did it by negotiation,—sending down a message by his trusty squire (who was worthy of his master, and whom we well plied with bribes to keep him quiet) to say, that the troops had applied to him for leave to plunder the caravan, that he had great difficulty to restrain them, and would not be answerable for our safety, if there was not immediately sent to him thirty-five purses of piastres (a purse contains five hundred piastres, or five

pounds sterling), with shawls and various things, of which he made requisition. Having a good deal of money with us, precaution was taken to put the greater part of it in the pack-saddles of the muleteers, and for which one of the most wretched horses was chosen, as not likely to run away, nor to be run away with.

It happened that the Khan had kept out for present expenditure about twenty-four purses, and this he offered to the Agha's agent, with three shawls, which, after some hours of discussion and difficulties, the man was prevailed upon to depart with. This was a civil way of robbery; and certainly we preferred it to the violence of a general plunder.

During this day we heard of the Agha's preparations for leaving the fortress. News had reached him of the occupation of Erzroume by the Russians, and the wretch then began to tremble for his own safety. My friend asked his permission to occupy the fortress after he had quitted it; but he seemed still very unwilling to lose sight of us, and pressed us to go with him for protection towards the lake of Van, on our return to Tabreez. But this would be the lambs travelling with the

wolves. Even our present precarious situation was preferable to venturing on the highways of plunder and anarchy.

This was a very busy day. We had numerous visitors, including our good friends the moolahs. One of them had rather an enquiring mind, and asked me, through the Khan, a variety of astronomical questions; amongst others, "was it true what he had heard, that the great globe turned round, or was it the sun?—he could hardly tell." I was endeavouring to explain to him the vicissitudes of the seasons, the day and the night, &c., and in the midst of my learned discourse, the cry was again heard—"the Koords! the Koords!" Up jumped my enquiring friend and the moolah, as though they had received an electric shock, and hastened to the fortress, to my infinite amusement, leaving the globe and the stars to their rotatory courses.

During this bustling day many reports were brought us of the intention to plunder the camp; amongst others, that the Agha had sent for two neighbouring chiefs to come down with more troops for the purpose. This kept us on the *qui vive*, and seemingly some crisis was approaching.

The muleteers became much alarmed, and even talked of deserting us, and we had therefore great difficulty in keeping up even an appearance of numerical force. At five o'clock a Koordish chief, with about fifty horsemen, came down the hill—a fierce-looking party of brigands, ripe for any thing; and within half an hour, another party of about double that number, came from another district, and entered the fortress. On enquiring of the Agha's agent about the arrival of these troops, he said that they came as an escort to conduct the Agha to-morrow to the lake of Van, as he was afraid of the neighbouring Koords. In the meantime they were scheming for the general plunder; and as rogues sometimes disagree amongst themselves, so it happened in the present instance; to which circumstance, as it should seem, we owed our lives.

At nine o'clock in the evening, three of the party came to visit us, including the chief, with the view of ascertaining the best way of making the attack, and to reconnoitre the victims of their cupidity. Always to treat them with the utmost civility was the best policy, and was adopted by the Khan, which, more than any thing, seemed to disarm the

barbarians. He entertained them with coffee and pipes, and seemingly placed the most implicit confidence in their friendship. For my part, I eyed them very narrowly, to endeavour to read our new companions, and fancied they were more the buccaners of necessity than of choice. As usual, I was the great object of attraction and conversation. At length they took their leave, and then the chief of the other tribe, with his armed followers, came to our tent. I found him the fiercest-looking Koord of all my acquaintance. He was also entertained with the same civility, and asked numerous questions, and looked full of purpose.

You do not know what it is, I believe, to entertain the man who may be going to rob or murder you the next hour. It is rather an awkward sensation certainly; but it will not do to be too sensitive on such occasions. We found that, on his return to the Agha, as they could not agree on the subject of plunder, the design was abandoned. But the new Chief thought that as he had come all this way for the purpose, it was hard to give up the prize; so he said that he would plunder us himself. The Agha, fearing that he should get the disgrace without any of the profit, positively

forbad him to do so, and being the stronger of the two, it was his interest now to protect us.

The Khan becoming rather alarmed at this state of things, sent to the Agha for some troops to protect us, alleging danger from the Koords without. This he readily granted, for the reason before stated.

Our position now became rather critical; but, I do not know how it is, I can never bring myself to the anticipation of danger; so I lay down on my mat as usual, and slept most soundly until, at midnight, I was awoke by the Khan crying out to me—"Put on your boots—we are going to be plundered and murdered!" Rather an agreeable message, you will say, to be awoke with; but I deliberately did as I was bid, put on my boots, took my gun, and walked around the camp. Rounds of firing were going on against some unseen enemy; and it is said that there were two or three hundred Koords outside, concealed behind the stones, waiting to pounce upon us. From which we had most to fear, therefore, the Koords within or without, was a nice question—the chances being about even. The guards appointed to protect us might be in league with one of the chiefs

to plunder us; we could not tell, and had no resource but to wait quietly the result, and in the meantime, to assume a seeming confidence in our new troops, who kept up a running fire all night.

After waiting some hours, and seeing no immediate danger of attack, I returned to my couch, and slept again as before, being occasionally awoken by the noise of the guns. Thus passed over our most eventful night, and the return of morning brought with it a calm, which seemed to whisper to me—"Yea, though an host should encamp against me, yet will I not fear."

(In Continuation). July 19.

Our camp adventures are now drawing to a close, which you will not be sorry for; for I fear I fatigue you with my long detail. Having ascertained on the Thursday morning that the Agha would really quit the fortress that day, we prepared to enter it, and at two o'clock the mules and donkeys were put in requisition for our grand march of about fifty yards. Even whilst we were preparing, the mountain Koords hovered about us, and we were obliged to have an escort of the fortress Koords whilst the cattle were entering the gates. You may judge by these facts the condi-

tion of this wild country. Even a Turk observed to me, who was in the Agha's train, and lately from Constantinople, " You are come into a lawless country, where they are restrained by no government."

We arrived in the Agha's divan just as he was about to leave it; we exchanged courtesies, and pretended the greatest respect for this plunderer (my dear friend, what a world of duplicity this is, in which we are sometimes obliged to take a part!) He said that he had left a magazine of powder and of biscuits; but the only two guns of the garrison he took with him. In all the pomp and circumstance of his oriental dignity, which in these *would-be* grandees always amuses me so much, the Agha and his troops now evacuated the fortress; but they had great difficulty in clearing the gate, from the throng of Armenians which were pressing in for security. So great was the dread of the Koords outside, that it looked like a castle besieged; about fifteen hundred animals, man and beast, were thronging in at the small gateway, with such a clamour and pressure, that the scene beggars all description. Men, women, children, buffaloes, donkeys, all mixed up in one heterogeneous mass,





clambering and cudgelling, brawling and striving, until the very ribs of the castle seemed to yield to them. It was at least five hours before the whole of the caravan came in, and the noise and confusion began to subside.

During this pressure the Khan's greatest anxiety was evinced to save an old yaboo—the horse already alluded to. I could not, at the time, imagine why this was deemed more important than his fine saddle-horses—not knowing that it was so richly freighted. At length it was announced that they had succeeded in getting the horse within the gate; but in the extreme pressure he had been trampled to death—"Bring in the pack-saddle," said the Khan. The booty was secured, the animal flayed, and the skin made use of against our enemies.

I witnessed the scene from the balcony, which was very lofty, and thought that many lives must have been sacrificed to the eager haste of those wretched Armenians to find shelter within the citadel. I endeavoured also to trace some of the indications of character. One woman, finding that she had no chance of getting in herself, popped her child on the shoulders of another, that the infant might be saved, whatever might become of

the mother. Towards the evening a poor invalid was brought in his blanket, borne by four men, desirous, seemingly, of dying in peace.

At eight o'clock we began to breathe a little from our fatiguing toil. The Armenians elected the Khan for their chief, and then he had to organise his new government, to ascertain our means of defence, &c. The whole of the arms that we could muster amounted only to seven muskets. These were intrusted to the most valiant looking men; the rest were armed with scythes and clubs, to the best of their ability. Fancy us then established in the Agha's divan. What a change of fortune had taken place within a week, —being ourselves the governors where we had formerly been the plundered and the prisoners!

I made the round of the citadel to see what our new subjects were composed of. The whole of the court, the walls, the roofs, the ruined towers, were occupied with groups of living creatures, man and beast, mixed up together; and, I may say, I never saw such a mass of human rubbish as our garrison was composed of. The noise, the confusion of their arranging themselves for the night, was most amusing. At ten o'clock, we made the survey of

the outer walls, to appoint the guards, the signals, the fires, &c., to keep off the Koords, a small party of whom appeared soon after we got within the gates, and we fired on them from the balcony. So very barbarous are they, that an Armenian family coming in just at that moment, they attacked them, shot one man, who is since dead, and cut off the ears of another, because they could find but little plunder.

We passed the night uncommonly well, stretched on the ground miscellaneously; and this being the first time I had slept within a besieged fortress (for so this may be considered from our numerous foes without), I was lucky in being only awakened occasionally by the noise of the guards. The next day we had to enter upon our new duties. Having taken upon myself the police department, I had to make the survey of our dominions. The outer walls are very extensive, sufficient to enclose three thousand Armenian families, who, in their small burrowed hovels, appear to be in a wretched state of misery. Numerous ruined towers and battlements bespoke its having been the object of formidable attacks, principally, I understand, from the Persians, and frequently from the neighbouring

pashas, when the rebellious governors would not acknowledge their authority. It is the most considerable place in Koordistan, and was formerly the capital of three hundred villages, which rapine and strife amongst the Koords have very much reduced. I found out the baths, the dungeon, the magazines, &c.; and really, some of the ruins were so very respectable as to bear the stamp of excellent architectural taste. I attribute these to the time of the Armenians, before the conquest of this country by the Toorkomans, since I discovered many stone coffins, with the cross, and other devices of the Christian worship, still very evident upon them. It struck me that there must be some scope for antiquarian research. I therefore hired my guide, and the above were the results.

Fancy me now full of my important duties; the people staring at me in all directions, wondering who and what I could be, many of them never having seen a Ferenghee before; pulling me by the coat, and gazing at my novel costume. I should tell you, that our subjects were made up from many villages, independent of the people from Maliz-Ghird, and they are governed by their local chiefs, chosen, I believe, on the same

principle that the Israelites chose the son of Kish, because "from his shoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the people."

The Khan, immediately on entering this place, had despatched a letter to the General Paskevitch, at Erzroume, saying that he was established for the time in the fortress of Maliz-Ghird, requesting his Excellency would be pleased to send us some troops immediately, not being certain of retaining it for a single day against the Koords, &c. In the morning, the Khan held an Armenian divan, to consider of the internal affairs of his government, and to make arrangements for preserving order, security, &c.; and you would have been amused to see how this divan was composed of bare-footed, ragged, empty-looking senators, which would have formed a fine group for a Hogarth. I thought the Khan looked rather ashamed of his new subjects, and therefore declined sitting in council amongst them.

During this day, Osmund Agha and his party had moved from their station of the preceding evening a short distance off, and seemed hovering as though reluctant to give up the prize of the caravan, or to quit his territories; but now we

could set him at defiance from his own fortress, and were determined to resist if any attempt was made upon it. In the evening he sent two men to reconnoitre, with a message that he wanted some coffee and tobacco, which we sent him. Probably these men seeing our state of defence, made a report which induced them to move off the next morning, abandoning his two guns, which were taken possession of by another Koordish chief.

On Saturday we had a rebellion amongst our own subjects, who are the most unruly set I ever saw. Those from the different villages began quarrelling, on some idle dispute about forage for the cattle, and soon clubs went to work, with most amusing variety. I never saw better single-stick, nor better fighting. The women began to shriek, the cattle to bellow, and the most uproarious confusion bespoke quite an *émeute* in our garrison. Reading the riot act from the balcony would have been of no use; so we were obliged to fire upon them, and this had the desired effect of dispersing the mob.

My police influence being thus set at naught, I soon resigned my seals of office, since, without Bridewell or tread-mill, I had no chance of en-

forcing my decrees with such a barbarous multitude of insurgents. I took upon me, therefore, the military department, as adjutant-general, and was obliged also to act the doctor; for one of the wounded men was brought in from the fray, his head terribly cut by a bludgeon, and his family surrounding him in dreadful agony, lest it might prove fatal. All my knowledge of the medical art consisted in the Sangrado system, but I looked around for some instrument of operation. "Knock him on the nose," said I; this done, it spared me the trouble of bleeding; and as to warm water, I ordered immediate potations within and fomentations without, which had the desired effect. My medical skill was then at a high premium, and they lauded me with their "Marshallah," &c. But I shall not initiate you into it; suffice it, that under my directions, assuming a little of the professional consequence, thus inspiring the utmost confidence in my patient, which is the best of physic, I turned him off his mat the next morning sound as ever.

The Sunday was a quiet day, perfectly devoid of alarms from within or without. Therefore, for their good behaviour, their chief invited some of

his Armenian subjects to dine with him. About sixty of them squatted down in the hall of the divan, the floor of which was composed of earth, except a narrow part near the balcony, where we established ourselves. Each brought his platter; the knives and spoons, need I say, are those of nature's furnishing; and they mouthed it away very respectably for Armenian breeding; and what pleased me most was their substitute for *Non nobis*, which they sung with all their power of lung, after dinner.

I shall now conclude this long letter, which, with my books, has formed my only amusement lately. It is very uncertain how long we may be detained here, and we have no chance of escape to look to, but the arrival of the Russian troops.

Yours.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR G.

Fortress of Maliz-Ghird,
July 24.

Our garrison has been again rather feverish ; even the muleteers it is difficult to keep in order. They are weary of waiting here so long, and our new troops are getting tired of their duty. It is rather difficult at night to keep up the watches, and establish the necessary surveillance against the enemy.

On Tuesday we had an accession of forces of two hundred Armenians from another village ; they all find that there is no security out of the garrison. These Armenians are the most uncivilised of any I have seen. Their principal riches consist in their

cattle, of which they seem to make a sort of domestic companions, washing them very carefully all over, morning and evening, with their hands. They have but little taste for agriculture, though this country offers the greatest encouragement for it. Here and there beautiful rich patches may be seen, where the slightest cultivation has produced abundant results. I have scarcely noticed any tree or shrub throughout the whole of Koordistan. The view around here is wild and broken; on one side a high mountainous barrier, and on the other, a very wide branch of the Euphrates, over which is a fine old Armenian bridge, some parts of it scarcely passable. As I take my evening stand in our balcony, watching the setting sun, I trace its last rays merging in the crystal expanse, with a sort of melancholy feeling, whilst thinking of my friends in England, the immense distance which now divides me from them, and the probably long period that may elapse before I revisit Ferengistan.

But truce with reflections; I am now busied with realities, and it is the part of wisdom to make the best of them. To mark to you the vigilance of one of our guards, on Tuesday evening he espied

a suspicious-looking man outside the powder magazine; he fired at the man, and killed his dog. The man had a lantern with him, and he avowed afterwards that he meant to destroy us all, by blowing up the powder magazine. Having confessed this, he made his escape.

On Wednesday, a Koordish spy made his appearance within our garrison, and I thought the Armenians would have torn him to pieces. He could give no good account of himself, and was consequently consigned to *durance vile*, to reflect on his temerity. But the fellow had the ingenuity to escape the next day.

On Thursday, we received a message from our good friend the moolah, to say that we were to be attacked that night by one hundred and fifty musqueteers and fifty horsemen, and he cautioned us to be on the *qui vive*. I wondered how Hadji Osman Millah Hussein had sprung up again in our neighbourhood, since he departed with Mahomed and Osman Agha. Then I learned that the latter had returned to Mouch, from whence he came, being a creature of the pasha of that place; but the moolah, belonging to some of the

Koordish villages, had gone to his own tribes. His kindness hovered over us even at that distance, and we considered his message well worth attention; so we immediately set about examining the walls again, and filling up the breaches with huge stones, stopping the gaps of door-ways, securing the gates by stone plantations within; in short, I cannot tell you half the devices employed in this my first practical lesson in the art of fortification, my previous knowledge being derived only from my Uncle Toby's siege of Dendermond—with his scarp and counter-scarp, &c. Fancy me from the balcony, with all the importance of my military duties, issuing my orders—

“ Hang out our banners on the outward walls,
The cry is still—they come ! ”

However, we made good our defences as well as we could; set the men on the alert, doubled the watches, &c., and then looked out anxiously for the Koords. But of Koords came there none; so we considered ourselves now perfectly safe, and that they were afraid to attack us.

Amongst other ingenious devices, the Khan ordered a wooden gun to be made; a most respectable

piece of ordnance, I assure you it was—a twenty-four pounder—which we kept at the gate in hostile array against all threatening intruders. This magnificent piece of ordnance would have attracted great attention even amongst the Park guns. It consisted of the trunk of a tree hollowed out, and swathed well in the horse's skin alluded to, and mounted on a carriage quite as rude; our shot was of great stones, and a most respectable report it made. The moment the horsemen were seen in the distance, the "topchee" gave them a salute; it had a wonderful effect, even to scatter the redoubtable Koords: in this way it served us most essentially. The Khan's exertions are, in fact, indefatigable; and so curious are his expedients, that I would say no difficulties can conquer him.

This is now the tenth day of our imprisonment, and we are getting uneasy at having no letter as yet from the Russian general at Erzroume. It is rather a tiresome life; "hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and though we spin out, as well as we can, the long and weary hours by the aid of our books, &c., yet it is sometimes rather difficult "to

feather the wings of time." We have been ascertaining to-day, as nearly as possible, the total losses occasioned by this Acha plunderer, including small sums from the m ^{asters}, servants, their guns, our pistols, shawls, a horse, which one of the robbers took a fancy to, and I find that they amount to a very serious loss—several thousands of piastres.

Yours.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR G.

Erzroume, August 13.

Here we are once more at Erzroume, and have been since the 1st of the month, safe under Russian protection, and enjoying the pleasure of European society, free from Koordish alarms, or any other of those travelling difficulties which have so long attended us, and in the tranquil enjoyment of that ease which can only be appreciated by those who have for some time known the contrary. But I must conduct you regularly on the way, and not ask you to take so wide a leap as from Maliz-Ghird to Erzroume.

On the Monday morning we were surprised by the arrival of a pasha, and eight or ten horsemen,

and as they came peaceably, there was no objection to admitting them into the citadel. They came on a mission from General Paskevitch to some of the Koordish chiefs, inviting them amicably to take steps for restoring their country to some sort of tranquillity, and intimating that they would otherwise be visited by the Russian troops. From these people we learned that there was no present chance of any aid from Erzroume. We therefore deemed it prudent to lose no time, but avail ourselves of their return to accompany them.

The bustle of departure, and arranging with the Armenians, &c., who were very unwilling to part with their chief (so much so that I feared they would have forcibly detained him), occupied us the whole day; and we stole out of the garrison, caravan and all, at ten o'clock at night, favoured by a tolerably thick obscurity. We had now to pass through the most dangerous of the Koordish territory—the part from whence we were threatened to be attacked; night travel was therefore indispensable.

We accomplished the first stage to Kara-Kroban, an Armenian village, by ten the next morning, without stopping by the way, and without casualty

of any kind. Some part of the road was extremely difficult for the cattle, being narrow rocky passes, seemingly so defended by nature as to leave travellers completely in the power of those who might occupy them. In one of these was a sort of Koordish village, which our guide pronounced to be the most dangerous place, calling it the "Black Valley." I do not think that even the Russian troops could have protected us from a Koordish attack: fortunately, however, we sustained none. The villagers at Kara Kroban were all in arms at our approach; for they had themselves been attacked by the Koords; and we were cautioned once or twice on the way to be on our guard against them. Here we luxuriated in a degree of security that had been unknown to us for some time. The situation was prettier than any thing I had seen in this country; with an abundance of water, producing its never failing result of abundant riches. The villagers were harvesting; and every thing wore an air of pastoral gaiety, so different from the wild deserted regions which we had been for some time traversing, that I once more felt quite happy, as in lazy length I lay stretched by the water-side, to watch the setting

sun, thinking partly of you, my friend, and your enviable lot, placidly treading the flowery vale of life, whilst I, having determined to take a glance at the great world, have been tossed to and fro' by many a storm, and know not how many more may await me.

In the evening, some of the Armenians came to us from Maliz-Gbird, to say that, the morning after our quitting it, a party of thirty Koordis came down, and drove off all their cattle that were outside the walls, but made no attempt on the fortress.

We started on the Wednesday morning, at four o'clock, for Kouzli, an affair of six hours, which were unmarked by any incident beyond the usual monotony of travel. The land was richer than heretofore, and quite odoriferous, being thickly strewed with the most beautiful herbs and flowers—a regular piece of garden ground. The villagers were alarmed again, as usual; and two or three, on horseback, came forward to demand our quality, &c., with which being satisfied, they escorted us to the village, from whence we took our departure in the evening for our camp, a little way off, where we bivouacked in the open air.

Our next day's ride, to the village of Koulli,

was over a very wild mountainous country, partly enriched with pasture, and partly of a very barren and inhospitable character. We encamped on the banks of the Arras, a small branch of which fertilized the neighbouring country, and refreshed so much both man and beast for the time, that we tarried there. We sent to the village for provisions, but it appeared to be almost deserted. One poor inhabitant came to us, and said that it had been visited by the Koords only three days before, who had stripped him of every thing, even of his two sons, and he implored aid to relieve them from slavery. It appears that these wretches, when they can meet with nothing else, capture the children, and sell them as if they were cattle.

On the Friday, almost in the dark, we crossed the Arras at a shallow point, and continued our varying way over a picturesque and mountainous country, but very desolate, not a human being to be met with. We passed other villages, which had been quite abandoned by the terrified inhabitants on the approach of the Koords. In a very rich vale we once more encamped, though our march to-day was short, not exceeding five hours.

The last stage to Erzroume was now at hand,

and it being one of no trifling length, we got into the saddle this evening at eleven o'clock, to complete our long and wearying journey, or rather to reach some fixed station on the way. I have become quite fond of midnight travelling, particularly on account of one's missing the miseries of the noon-day heat.

As the opening dawn lit up our way the mountains were magnificent. This part of Koordistan is, in fact, by far the grandest of any I have seen; but still totally devoid of tree or shrub.

The ascents and descents of the route occasioned this day's march to be very interesting to me; but I cannot tarry to tell you all that I saw and felt. You must go on with me at once to the suburbs of Erzroume, where a small camp was established, for the purpose of enforcing quarantine. Here I first saw the European troops; nor did it matter to me whether they were English or Russian; I felt a sort of immediate protection, which you must have travelled through a lawless country properly to estimate. So strong was this feeling, that I could almost have embraced my European brethren, although they kept us the whole day waiting the pleasure of the general, and the visit of the doctor.

I found it, nevertheless, a day of negative enjoyment, and highly interesting in some particulars; for many squadrons of troops came in from Teflis, and two or three generals in their carriages, with all the amusing bustle of military movements. It was so long since I had seen such a sight, that (such is the force of temporary absence) I verily believe I looked around me with as much curiosity and delight as some of our domestics, who had never seen any thing of the sort before.

In the evening the doctor of the camp visited us. He was an Italian, and very polite; he examined our passports, and ordered every thing to be procured for us, including forage for our horses. A tent was put up purposely for our accommodation, and indeed, every attention was paid us that could have been shown to Russian subjects. The doctor promised to see us again in the morning, which he did, with a request from his excellency, the Count Paskevitch, that we would visit him. An officer was sent to conduct us, and at ten o'clock we set out to pay our respects to the general-in-chief.

As I rode through the streets to the citadel, I could not but contrast the then appearance of the town with what I had seen it last year; most of

the bazaars and the cafés closed; very few Turks to be seen, and those unarmed, and with a gloomy thoughtful tread, seeming to spurn the very soil which, only twelve months before, they went over almost like monarchs of the human race. The Turks are naturally a fierce-looking, proud, austere people. The Sultan's title, which I translated for you, and every item of which his subjects most cordially believe in, gives some idea of their character. To disarm a Turk is the greatest insult which can be offered him; they pride themselves very much on their girdle and pistols, the atagan, &c., and now I saw them with empty girdles; what a change for the haughty Musselmans!

In the seraskier's palace, within the citadel, the general had established his head-quarters, with all "the pomp and circumstance" of triumph about him; the Russian troops on guard, and in the court a body of them drawn up, and, to say truth, as fine a corps as I have almost ever seen. I believe no foreigner, certainly no Englishman, had ever before seen the haughty Turk's palace at Erzroume guarded by "infidels;" for ever since the days of the Romans, no invasion of this soil by Europeans has taken place.

We were conducted through two or three long antiquated rooms, lined with troops, with officers dressed in costumes of all descriptions—Georgian, Persian, Circassian, &c.; for the Russians have foreigners of almost all nations in their service. We were then conducted to the large saloon, or hall of audience, which was filled with officers, glittering in their stars and orders. The scene looked more like a prince's levee than that of a general-in-chief.

My friend the Khan, who is equally at home wherever he may be, either in a Koordish divan or a European assembly, soon recognised many of the officers who had known him during his Russian travels; and he joined in their talk, and received their greetings, as one of the band of brethren of this world's society. The courteous reception and polite attention of the general could not have been exceeded, had we been his compatriots. He enquired about Maliz-Ghird; acknowledged the Khan's letter; said he had sent troops to escort us; and then ended the conference by requesting us to dine with him at two o'clock.

We did not fail to accept this invitation, and

were most agreeably entertained at the Russian mess. The party was very numerous, and though not accustomed to military society, I derived much amusement from the scene; for my neighbours were full of conversation, and were exceedingly amused at the Khan's description of Osman Agha.* The general language of the table, I should tell you, was French.

After dinner, the General again addressed us, enquiring what were our plans and wishes with respect to our journey, and that he would be happy to facilitate it in any way by passports; and adding, that he considered Teflis to be the only safe road open to us. We then acknowledged his many civilities, and respectfully took leave, having previously received his permission to domicile for a time in the town; and accordingly, here we are, once more in our little harem apartment.

To proceed to Constantinople every one deems

* On the Khan's return to Tabreez, he succeeded in summoning Osman Agha to the presence of Abbas Meerza, whether he decoyed or frightened him, I never learnt. The Prince, indignant at the insult shown to his Envoy, was pouring out the vial of his wrath, ordering the immediate punishment of the bastinado, when the Khan interceded, and the Agha was pardoned.

impracticable, the dangerous state of the country having cut off all travelling; indeed, we are told that we should risk our lives by attempting it. In the present state of affairs it is impossible to make any definitive arrangements. We are thankful to find ourselves in security again, and shall enjoy that security for a short time during our stay here. Should I find any incidents deserving your attention, I will write to you again. So far as we can anticipate our movements, the Khan talks of returning to Tabreez; whereas I propose to make my way over the Caucasus.

Yours.



1

APPENDIX.

ITINERARY OF TATAR JOURNEY FROM TREBISONDE TO TABREEZ.

To Gevaslic . . .	4 hours.
Karacaban . . .	4
Gumish Kaneh . . .	8
Balahou . . .	8
Baiboot . . .	3
Karagulah . . .	4
Ash Kaleh . . .	8
Erzroume . . .	6
	<hr style="width: 10%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
	45 hours.
	<hr style="width: 10%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
To Hassan Kaleh . . .	3
Delli Baba . . .	6
Toprah Kaleh . . .	8
Youngali . . .	6
Diadin . . .	6
Avajek . . .	8 Persian village.
Kereny . . .	6
Ali Shah . . .	2
Khoe . . .	4
Zangera . . .	3
Maran . . .	3
Tabreez . . .	5
	<hr style="width: 10%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
	60 hours.
	<hr style="width: 10%; margin: 0 auto;"/>

From Trebisonde to Erzroume, about	}	200 miles, may be done in .	3 days.
From Erzroume to Tabreez, about	}	450 miles, may be done in .	4 days.
Together .		650 miles, may be done in .	7 days.

Expenses already stated.

EASY STAGES FROM TREBISONDE TO ERZROUME, OWN HOMES.

To Gevaalic . . .	6 hours.
Besh Kelisia . . .	8 Caravansery.
Ordessa . . .	5
Teki . . .	6
Altem Dosh . . .	8
Baiboot . . .	8
Musatt . . .	6
Cushapara . . .	8
Purchuke . . .	5
Erzroume . . .	5
	<hr/> 65 hours. <hr/>

This is the lower road, part of which is very beautiful, though not passable in the winter. The caravanseries offer but wretched accommodation. The other stations are villages, with plenty of food. If with loads or caravan travelling, it will require more time, say 75 hours.

ITINERARY FROM TEHRAN TO TABREEZ.

To Sulimania	.	.	8 furseks.
Kishlock	.	.	10
Kerishkeen	.	.	8
Koramdereh	.	.	9
Sultaniah	.	.	8
Zenjan	.	.	9
Armakaneh	.	.	9
Arkand	.	.	8
Miana	.	.	8
Karehchummun	.	.	8
Hadji Agha	.	.	7
Bostmich	.	.	8
Tabreez	.	.	4
			<hr/>
			104 furseks,
			<hr/>

Or about 450 English miles.

It is sometimes reckoned as so many hours: four miles in the hour is good travelling with the same horses.

There are many villages which may be branched off to, to vary the road. Thus, from Sulimania to Abdullabad and to Siadeen, from thence to Koramdereh.

Again, from Miana to Toorkamanchai.

- - to Tickmadash.

- - to Syeed Abad.

- and to Tabreez.

I have gone all the roads, and prefer the former.

ITINERARY FROM TABREEZ TO ERZROUME.

To Mayan . . .	3 hours.
Deezek Kaleh . .	5
Tassooch . . .	6
Khoe . . .	9
Ali Shah . . .	8
Kereney . . .	5
Avajek . . .	8 last Persian village
Byazide . . .	5 Turkish town
Diadin . . .	8
Mongressor . . .	6
Koupri Keui . . .	6
Toprah Kaleh . .	2
Moolah Suliman .	2
Dehar . . .	6
Comasoor . . .	9
Hassan Kaleh . .	6
Erzroume . . .	6
	<hr/> 100 hours,

Or about 450 English miles.

This road may be also varied. Thus—

From Tabreez to Sofian.

- - to Maran.

- - to Khoc.

From Dehar to Delli Baba.

- - to Comasoor.

I have gone all these roads, and only find the difference of six hours in favour of the former.

TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

With respect to the expenses of travelling in Persia, so much must depend on the liberality of the traveller, or the honesty of the servants who accompany him, that no rule whatever can be laid down for it. The cost of the Tatar gallop, with four horses, I have already stated, beside the necessary provisioning for the way.

From Tehran to Tabreez, being twenty days on the road, with four people and as many horses, I did it comfortably for twenty tomanas (about ten pounds sterling).

From Tabreez to Erzroume, about the same time and distance, nearly the same expenses.

The "yekdan," or saddle-bags, should contain coffee, sugar, tea, tobacco, rice, and any other dainty that may suit the traveller's taste. On the road he will find bread, eggs, fowls, and "yaourt," or sour milk. Meat will seldom be met with, unless he take a lamb from the flock, or a calf from the stall. This I have often done, hanging the remains to dry at the end of the pack-saddle.

An English bridle and saddle is indispensable to comfort; and the traveller must go well armed, a brace of pistols, a gun, and ataghan, being indispensable. If the traveller has any reading propensities, they will be very useful to while away his time at the resting-places. He may smoke at first in self-defence; but he will find at last that it supplies all deficiencies.

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The parliamentary papers referred to give the following copy of these instructions:—

“ That the Persian government shall conclude an equitable arrangement with the government of Herat, and shall cease to weaken and disturb these countries.

“ That the Persian government, according to the stipulations of the general treaty, shall conclude a commercial treaty with Great Britain, and that it shall place the commercial agents of Great Britain on the same footing, with respect to privileges, &c., as the consuls of other powers.

“ That the person who seized and ill-treated Ali Mahomed Beg, a messenger of the British mission, shall be punished ; and that a firmaun shall be issued, such as shall prevent the recurrence of so flagrant a violation of the laws and customs of nations.

“ That the Persian government shall publicly abandon the pretension it has advanced, to a right to seize and punish the Persian servants of the British mission without reference to the British minister.

“ That the Governor of Bushire, who threatened the safety of the British resident there, shall be removed ; that the other persons concerned in that transaction shall be punished ; and that measures shall be taken to prevent the recurrence of such proceedings.”

ROYAL FIRMAUNS.

" Preamble of a treaty between Futtee Ali Shah, King of Persia, and the Marquis of Wellesley, Governor-General of India, by Sir John Malcolm.*

" Praise be to God, who said, 'Oh, you who believe, perform your contracts, perform your covenant with God, and enter into covenant with Him, and violate not your engagements after the ratification thereof;' after the voice is raised to the glory of the God of the world, and the brain is perfumed with the scent of the saints and prophets, to whom be health and glory, whose rare perfections are perpetually chaunted by birds of melodious notes (angels), furnished with two, three, and four pair of wings, and to the highest seated in the heavens, for whom good has been predestinated, and the perfume mixed with musk, which scenteth the celestial mansions of those that sing hymns in the ethereal sphere, and to the light of the flame of the Most High, which gives radiant splendour to the collected view of those who dwell in the heavenly regions. The clear meaning of the treaty which has been established on a solid basis, is fully explained in this page, and is fixed as a prescription of law, that in the world of existence and trouble, in this universe of creation and concord, there is no action among those of mankind that tends more to the perfection of the human race, or to answer the end of their being and existence, than that of cementing

* This treaty was formed in 1800, at Sir John's first visit to Persia, and had reference to the Persians supplying a large force to protect the Honourable Company's territories from the incursions of the Affghans.

friendship, and establishing intercourse, communication, and connexion betwixt each other. The image reflected from the mirror of accomplishment is a tree fruitful and abundant, and one that produces good both now and hereafter. To illustrate the allusions that it has been proper to make, and explain these metaphors worthy of exposition at this happy period of auspicious aspect, a treaty has been concluded between the high in dignity, the exalted in station, attended by fortune of great and splendid power; the greatest amongst the high viziers in whom confidence is placed, the faithful of the powerful government, the adorned with greatness, power, glory, splendour, and fortune, Hadji Ibrahim Khan, on being granted leave, and vested with authority from the principal post of the high king, whose court is like that of Solymán, the asylum of the world, the sign of the power of God, the jewel in the King of Kings, the ornament in the cheek of eternal empire, the grace of the beauty of sovereignty and royalty, the king of the universe, like Caherman, the mansion of mercy and justice, the Phoenix of good fortune, the eminence of never-fading prosperity, the King, powerful as Alexander, who has no equal among the princes exalted to majesty by the heavens in the globe, or shade from the shade of the Most High, a Khoosroo, whose saddle is the moon, and whose stirrup is the new moon, a prince of great rank, before whom the sun is concealed."

(Then follow the Arabic verses, or compliments to the envoy.)

"Thy benevolence is universally dispersed, every where drops are scattered, thy kindness shadows cities, may God fix firm the basis of thy dominion, and may God fix and extend thy power over the servants of the Almighty; and high in

station and dignity, the great and able in power, the adorning of those acquainted with manners, Captain John Malcolm, delegated from the sublime quarter of the high in power, seated on a throne, the asylum of the world, the chief jewel in the crown of royalty and sovereignty, the anchor of the vessel of victory and fortune, the ship on the sea of glory and empire, the blazing sun in the sky of greatness and glory, lords of the countries of England and India, may God strengthen his territories, and establish his glory and commands upon the seas! in the manner explained in his credentials, which are sealed with the seal of the most powerful and the most glorious, possessing fortune, the origin of rank, splendour, and nobility, the ornament of the world, the accomplisher of the works of mankind, the Governor-General of India.

“ The treaty between these two great states shall be binding on race after race, while the world exists, and act in conformity to what is now settled.

“ Article I. As long as the sun, illuminating the circle of the two great contracting parties, shines on their sovereign dominions, and bestows light on the whole world, the beautiful image of excellent union shall remain fixed on the mirror of duration and perpetuity, the thread of shameful enmity and distance shall be cut, conditions of mutual aid and assistance between the two states shall be instituted, and all causes of hatred and hostility shall be banished.” (Then follow four other articles, the treaty being bound by the following conclusion):—“ While time endures, and while the world exists, the contents of this exalted treaty shall remain an admired picture in the mirror of duration and perpetuity, and submission to the fair image on this conspicuous page shall be everlasting.”

Firmaun relative to the Mines in Persia, from the Shah to his Son, Abbas Meerza.

In the year of the Hegira, 1245 (A.D. 1830)

“ The royal and auspicious command of his Majesty was issued (to wit) that the keys of the gates of prosperity, and the brilliancy of the soul of royalty—the accomplished and distinguished son—the deputy of this everlasting sovereignty, Abbas Meerza, may he be blessed and happy. And be it known to him, that according to what has been represented to our illustrious presence, that incomparable son has granted to the sagacious, faithful, and highly distinguished servant, his Excellency ———, the important affairs of the mines of Azerbaijan, and has committed the execution of that important service to the charge of the endeavours of the above-mentioned distinguished gentleman ; and since the manners of the sagacity, and the intellectual power of the above-mentioned gentleman has become manifest to the presence of his Majesty. We have from the beginning of the year 1244, and the time to come, granted the execution of that important affair to the above-mentioned gentleman, that according as it suits that distinguished gentleman’s natural talent, he may employ his skill and services towards that concern, he may bring the well-informed miners from whatever country he may find out, and employ according to his own management and sagacity ; so that he may prove the manifestation of his services in procuring the fruits of the mines. And we further command, that that son, according to what he had agreed, will confine the execution of that important science to the above-mentioned gentleman, and all the necessary helps on your part should be stored upon him, and to establish him in his im-

portant service, and heal him with your royal favour. We further command that their Excellencies, the distinguished nobles of the Court of Exchequer, and the Ministers of the supreme Court of Royalty should preserve copy of this royal Firmaun in their respective registers, and preserve them from any alteration or forgery."

(Sealed with his Majesty's imperial seal, and registered and sealed by the grand Vizier and twelve other Ministers of State).

Firmaun from Abbas Meerza, relative to the Mines.

"The royal command is issued, viz., that the object of our illustrious mind is this—that the mines which are in the country of Azerbaijan, as far as are under our dominion, should not remain useless nor unproductive—nay, they should be useful and profitable; and as his Excellency ———, &c. &c., on whose learning and the high degree of his service we have great confidence, and are sensible of. He in the auspicious presence of his Royal Highness, requested that he should be appointed to execute this important service, and have committed to his charge the mines of the above-mentioned countries. We have granted for the space of twenty-one years, that he may procure miners from England whenever he should approve them to be learned and distinguished in this art, to open the mines; and by the help of God, they should employ all their endeavours and efforts, that this important affair should be terminated with success, and so may be the means of the increase of the royal favour towards him," &c.

(The grant was confirmed by the eldest son of the Crown Prince of Persia).

Firmaun from Mahmoud Meerza, the present Shah of Persia (Son of Abbas Meerza).

"This royal order denotes, that since the powerful and penetrating command of his Royal Highness the superior and my Lord of Bounty, the mighty deputy of sovereignty to whom my life is devoted, has established the honour of working the mines," &c. &c. (recapitulating as before).

"We, therefore, obediently to the royal commands, according to its contents, it having been commanded and ordered to us, who are the most obedient of servants, that we should also pass and order agreeably to the royal command. We, therefore, obediently to the royal commands of his Royal Highness (our father), in the manner that that royal order has passed, from the beginning of the present year until the time above mentioned, have granted that important affair to the above mentioned distinguished gentleman, in order that without interruption or interference of any one, he should work the above mentioned mines. We further command that the great marshals and the superior nobles, the governors of the different districts of Azerbaijan, shall obey this command, and consider all the requisites and necessities therein confined exclusively to him; their excellencies the secretaries of the blessed state should register and preserve the contents of the royal firmaun, and having preserved it from the guile of any alterations, and obey it necessarily."

Firmaun from Abbas Meerza accrediting the before-mentioned "distinguished Gentleman" to the Government of the Sublime Porte.

(After various salutations.) "We represent that in conformity to the friendship and unanimity which exists between the two sublime powers, the constant desire of our heart is

that we may make inquiries respecting the true state of your Majesty's health in a becoming manner, and evince in an appropriate way the degree of friendship which exists in our heart towards your Majesty.

"Wherefore at this time, when the Alijah (the illustrious), the ornament of Christian nobles, ———, being about to proceed to that country (Turkey), we have written this epistle, expressing our sincerity.

"The afore-mentioned Alijah, one of our agents, is on his way to England, by Constantinople, for the accomplishment of some affairs, and intends to return after awhile; it is therefore requested from your Majesty, that during the stay of the said Alijah in Constantinople, and before his departure for England, whatever he may require with regard to the affairs of the sublime power of Persia, and shall make known the same to your Majesty according to the friendship existing between the two sublime powers, you will be pleased to take notice of them, so that, if it please God, by the assistance and attention of your Majesty, the affairs that are committed to him may be accomplished."

Reply from the Kaimacan Paasha to Abbas Meerza.

(After the customary titles.) "We have received through the channel of the most excellent amongst the noblest of Christians, ———, who is on his way to the British government on the part of the illustrious government of Persia, the letter which your Royal Highness has addressed to his Highness the Supreme Vizier, to request that a favourable reception be given to the demands of the above-mentioned Khan relative to your affairs; we have perfectly understood the meaning thereof.

"The Sublime Porte of everlasting duration have always had at heart to receive favourably and agreeably to treaties all subjects and agents of the kind belonging to the illustrious government of Persia, bound in sincere friendship with the Sublime Porte.

"It is for this reason, and in consequence of the above-mentioned Khan having made known to us that he is going to proceed to England, agreeable to the instructions given to him, that we seize of the circumstance to address the present friendly letter to your Royal Highness." (Many compliments follow.)

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The Persians consider Ali to have been the handsomest man that was ever created, and they say that the blessed in heaven account it their chiefest felicity to be beloved by him. In the mosque at Koom, in which he was interred with the fair Fatima, the daughter of Mahomet, is inscribed six songs, in golden characters, from which I select the following:—

"O inexpressible man! who hast no equal but Mahomet, the select Prophet, what is the light of the sun compared to thy understanding! destiny does but execute thy commands; the sun is enlightened by the beams of thy knowledge. If thy glory be weighed in the balance of exalted sense, the highest mountains weighed against it would appear no more than the seed of lentils; the sun is made a crown of glory of the shadow of thy umbrella. O! divine and sacred host, nature is only adorned and enriched by thee—had not thy perfect being been in the idea of the Creator, Eve had been eternally a virgin and Adam a bachelor. The angel Gabriel every day

kisses the ground-sill of thy gate, as being the only way that leads to the throne of Mahomet. Minister especially elected of God for the master of the faithful! Thou art the son of the Prophet of God. The sparkling rubies cover themselves with the earth in the hollow of the mines, ashamed of their not being bright enough to be put into thy treasure. The universal spirit, with its sublime knowledge, cannot arrive at the portals of thy gate, O master of the faithful! Were there a place more exalted than the most high throne of God, I would affirm it to be thy place. O master of the faithful! That we may give thee praises worthy of thyself it behoves us to depict thy wonderful essence; for that reason alone it is impossible to praise thee according to thy merit, O master of the faithful! We be all poor beggars at the gate of thy beneficence, and the kings of the world are in the number of those beggars, O master of the faithful! The price of thy favours surpasses human understanding. The weight of thy majesty and of thy glory is too heavy for the shoulders of human understanding. Being of inconceivable puissance, the commands of Providence are executed by thy orders. Thou canst turn with thy hands alone the vast celestial sphere. The sun, under whose shadow and auspicious omens nature rolls, is but a glittering beam of the clasp of thy girdle. The superior of the college of creation, Gabriel, and all his art and knowledge, is but a mere scholar to thee. The verses of the Alcoran, which assure men of the mercy and favour of God, were sent from heaven for thy sake, O destroyer of heresy! Thou art the secretary of the commandments of divine inspiration; the judge of things commanded or forbidden. If the idea of thee, the most noble of divine essence, were not in the world, the world would be but an imperfect and

senseless figure. Supreme majesty, who hast augmented the lustre of the supreme throne, all creatures necessarily praise thy name. The sun is less than an atom in the heaven of assemblies where thou art honoured, and the atoms are greater than the sun upon those places of the earth where thou hast wrought by miracles. The glory of Solomon, who was the glory of the earth, was a small thing in comparison of thee. It is a sin to compare thee with a man ; for how can a poor lamp of the earth pretend to compare with a diamond of the clearest water. Human wit cannot find a man equal to thee, but by turning towards Mahomet. This is our firm and clear faith, and I can say no more."

OF THE ANGELS.

Of the angels the Persians have strange ideas, some of which I copy from the Musselmans' catechism :—" We believe with the heart, and confess with the mouth, that the most high God has servants or ministers, to whom is given the name of angels, who are perfectly free from all sin, who assist continually before God, who punctually execute his commands, and never disobey him. Respecting their nature, we are required to believe that their bodies are subtle, pure, and formed of light ; that they neither eat, drink, nor sleep ; that they have no sensual properties, nor carnal appetites, and are without father or mother. Some stand erect ; others maintain inclined postures ; others are seated, and with the forehead bowed down, and adore the Creator. Some chaunt his praise, and sing hymns to his glory ; others laud and magnify him after another manner ; and others intercede with him for the pardon of

human sins. There are those among them who record our actions in the registry ; there are others who protect us ; others surround, and others still bear the throne of God, or they are employed in duties agreeable to the Deity."

OF THE ASTROLOGERS.

The Persians highly respect the astrologers, who consult the planets, of which they speak in the following extravagant terms:—"Praise be to that great Creator that formed heaven and earth, and the heavenly bodies, amongst whose divine works mankind appear but a small spot. The dark Saturn, like a sentinel, in the seventh heaven, is attentive to his interests ; the glorious Jupiter, like an able judge, enthroned in the sixth heaven, is watchful of his desires ; and the bloody Mars, with his stained sabre, sits in the fifth heaven, the ready executioner of his Maker's wrathful commands ; and the resplendent Sun, encircled by a flaming crown, shines in the fourth heaven with light that he has received from the Almighty ; the beautiful Venus, like a glad minstrel, sits in her elegant apartment in the third heaven, supported by His power ; the feathered Mercury, like a wise secretary, sits in the second heaven, the writer of the Almighty's orders ; the clear Moon sits enthroned in the first heaven, a sign of the Creator's power."

OF SOOFISM, OR INFIDELITY IN PERSIA.

Many of the Persians have no belief whatever in the doctrines of the Koran. Soofism, or infidelity, prevails a good deal amongst them, of which the following is their belief:—
“ That the souls of men differ infinitely in degree, but not at all in kind, from the divine spirit of which they are particles, and in which they will be ultimately absorbed ; that the spirit of God pervades the universe almost immediately present to his work, and, consequently, always in substance ; that He alone is perfect benevolence, perfect truth, perfect beauty ; that the love of Him alone is real and generous love, while that of all other objects is absurd and illusory ; that the beauties of nature are faint resemblances, like images in a mirror, of the divine charms ; that from eternity without beginning to eternity without end, the Supreme Benevolence is occupied in bestowing happiness, or the means of attaining it ; that men can only attain it by performing the part of the primal covenant between them and their Creator ; that nothing has a pure absolute existence but mind or spirit ; that material substances—as the ignorant call them—are no more than gay pictures, presented continually to our minds by the sempiternal artist ; that we must beware of attachment to such phantoms, and attach ourselves exclusively to God, who truly exists in us, as we exist solely in Him ; that we retain ever in this forlorn state of separation from our beloved the idea of heavenly beauty, and the remembrance of our primeval vows, that sweet music, gentle breezes, fragrant flowers, perpetually renew the primary idea, refresh our fading memory, and melt us with tender affection ; and by abstracting our souls from vanity, that is, from all but God, approximate to his essence

in our final union, with which will consist our supreme beatitude."

The Vedanta creed says, "That, excepting the Deity, nothing exists, the universe being only an appearance without any reality ; just as a man in a dream sees imaginary objects, and in that state experiences ideal pleasure and pain ; so that life is nothing but a dream, there being only one resplendent light, which assumes different appearances."

It is an extraordinary fact of the Mahomedans, that the Turks are imbued with a strong traditional belief that they shall be driven out of Europe ; and the good Moslem orders his bones to be interred on the Asiatic side of Constantinople, that they may not be disturbed by the invaders. Of the Persians, also, it is said by modern travellers, that in the south it is a common enquiry amongst them, " When are the English coming to take possession of Persia ?" Evidently there is a shaking amongst the dry bones !

THE END.

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